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UVic prof raises privacy rights concern over law test

by Matthew Gauk

As though aspiring lawyers walking into their Law School Admission Tests (LSATs) don't have enough to worry about.

Added to that stress is a fingerprinting that finds its way to an American company, into an information database, and from there potentially into the hands of the FBI.

The group that administers the LSATs worldwide is the Law School Admission Council (LSAC), an American non-profit organization that requires fingerprints to "ensure and protect the identity" of the testee. LSAC administers the LSAT to Canadian students under the auspices of a subsidiary company. Most Canadian law schools require the LSAT as part of a student's application, with the notable exception of the McGill faculty of law.

Since the USA Patriot Act was passed in 2001, security agencies of the American government can now gain access to any information they deem vital to national security—including the LSAT fingerprint records—without informing the person whose records are being accessed.

This fact came to light recently when a group of concerned students brought the issue to the attention of philosophy department ombudsperson and professor Dr. Eike-Henner Kluge.

Kluge, the founding director of the Canadian Medical Association's department of ethics and legal affairs, has since approached the B.C. Privacy Commissioner and Dean Andrew Petter of the UVic Law School with his concern that the LSAT requirement constitutes an invasion of law school applicants' privacy.

"This sets up the U.S. as 'big brother' who can access information about me whenever they wish," said Kluge. "It's bad enough that all my credit information goes to a central U.S. clearing house. But this is worse because it provides a unique identifier that allows all possible information about me to be tied together into one bundle."

UVic is a public institution, and as such must design its policies and regulations in such a way that they remain in keeping with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. The Charter allows an infringement of privacy rights only if it is demonstrably necessary, and the test of that necessity must meet the standards set out in several Supreme Court rulings, said Kluge. But as the LSAT matter stands, the matter is out of the Canadian government's control.

In September, Kluge contacted Dean Petter of the UVic Law School and outlined the situation.

"My personal reaction to the fingerprinting is that it's an overreaction to security concerns over a scholastic aptitude test," said Petter, who can't remember having been fingerprinted when he took the exam. "But the LSATs have been a long-standing requirement for most law schools across Canada."

ANTHONY FRATTAROLI GRAPHIC

Law school applicants must submit fingerprints for entrance tests.

Grade point averages can be hard to equate from different institutions. The LSATs, Petter explained, are helpful to students and institutions alike, as they provide a common aptitude test for students to be compared on a level playing field.

Kluge believes that since the UVic Law School is using the LSAT exams when they know about this matter, they are in fact complicit in the perpetuation of an unethical invasion of privacy.

Petter and other Canadian law deans have appealed to LSAC to reconsider the fingerprint requirement. They want to make sure that fingerprinting is no longer a requirement for Canadian students, or to at least see that the information doesn't find its way into U.S. databanks.

If they fail, law schools will have to decide whether to take the LSAT off of admission requirements or force students to submit their fingerprints.

Kluge has requested the consideration of the Office of the B.C. Privacy Commissioner in the issue. They have so far agreed to meet with other privacy commissioners on the provincial and federal level.

"They [the privacy commissioners] can require that LSAC, as a condition of administering the LSAT in B.C. and Canada, drop the fingerprint requirement," said Kluge. "That, to me, seems to be the most reasonable thing since there are other, less intrusive ways of guaranteeing identity, which is the alleged reason for the requirement."

Since there are other ways of establishing identity—such as official picture ID—this is an indefensible requirement in the first place, said Kluge. He points out that UVic itself only requires photo ID for identity verification during exams, as does airport security.

"Photo ID works for everything else, so why do you need a fingerprint for this?" asked Brian Catinus, a third-year political science student who is considering law school. "I think it's pretty ridiculous."

The situation resembles one in which the maintenance of B.C. health care records by Maximus BC, a subsidiary of Maximus Corporation in the U.S., came into question in 2004.

In that case, the B.C. Legislature passed a special statutory requirement aimed at protecting the privacy of the health records managed by Maximus BC. The requirement called for all health records to be encrypted and for the encryption key to remain in the possession of the B.C. government.

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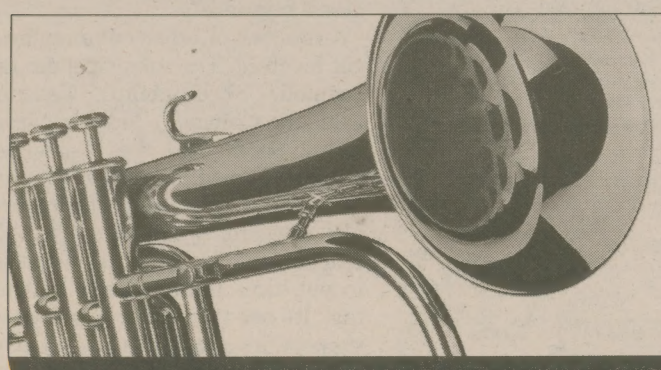
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WESLEY SCOTT PHOTO

The number of homeless people in Victoria is rising, and people are being turned away from shelters.

The changing face of homelessness

by Bryna Hallam

The number of homeless people in Victoria has risen over the past few years.

Youth, aboriginals, and mothers with children are among those struggling to find shelter in Victoria.

To raise awareness about homelessness in and around Victoria, the city proclaimed last week "Homeless Week."

"Homeless Week is about awareness and public education," said Mayor Alan Lowe at the start of the week. "The week will help us see the many diverse faces of the homeless in our community and encourage us to do more to provide decent housing and services to those most in need. These include families, seniors, men, women, and children, the employed, and unemployed."

"We wanted to introduce greater Victoria to some of the different faces of homelessness, rather than the traditional older gentleman that people see on the street with their hat in hand," said Kathy Stinson, executive director of the Victoria Cool Aid Society and a member of the Victoria Steering Committee on Homelessness.

"There are many different reasons why people come to the point of being homeless," she said, citing addiction, mental health issues and income as common factors.

One of the biggest issues facing Victoria is the lack of beds in shelters. "Right now we have a capacity issue in Victoria," said Stinson. In a homeless count last winter, volunteers counted over 700 homeless people in one night—168 of which were sleeping outdoors.

"Unfortunately, the number of homeless in Victoria continues to grow—we are turning people away every night at Streetlink and Sandy Merriman emergency shelters," said Stinson.

Victoria's shelters have 182 beds. When the weather gets cold and there is heavy rain, wind or snow, up to 110 additional beds are opened up according to the city's "Extreme Weather Protocol." Last week's wet and windy weather resulted in the city moving to the second of three stages.

"The folks that do open up for stage two . . . it's a stretch for them," said Stinson. Most of the extra "beds" that become available are actually mats on floors.

Stinson believes more affordable housing could help ease the pressure on shelters and other service providers.

"Certainly if we had more housing, if some of the folks using the shelters had homes of their own, that would lessen the numbers and leave it more as an emergency response," she said. "That is where we would like to see the energy put, into making sure there's more housing available for the folks that need it, so there's less reliance on the shelters."

She also acknowledges that Victoria is a particular challenge because of the high cost of housing and the limited rental market.

Additional shelters might be something else to consider, she said.

Stinson would also like to see other municipalities get involved. In the city, the Victoria Steering Committee on Homelessness looks at how to respond effectively to the many challenges of homelessness within Victoria, and makes recommendations to interested parties, including governments. Currently, there is no regional body to respond to issues.

"What we need to do is expand the circle of support to some of the other municipalities," said Stinson. "It'd be nice to have more of a regional response."

A number of other communities got involved. The municipalities of Saanich, Esquimalt, Central Saanich, Colwood, Sidney, View Royal, Sooke and the Highlands also proclaimed Homeless Week.

"There's a lot of support for people proclaiming Homeless Week," said Stinson. "What we need now is to put some more 'oomph' behind that. It's one thing to proclaim your support; it's another to give money and services to the issue."

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Access denied

Advocacy group and UVSS dispute over expenditures and policy

by Matthew Gauk and Bryna Hallam

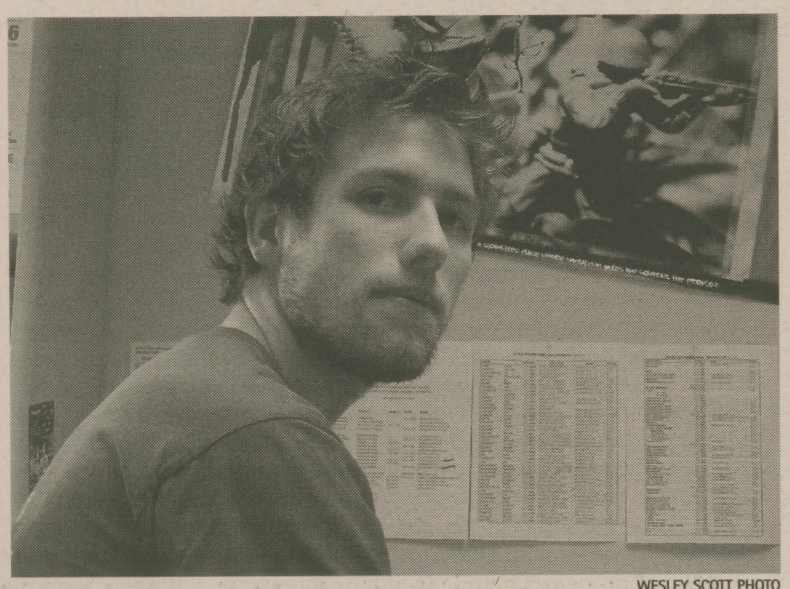
The UVic Students' Society and Access UVic, an advocacy group for students with disabilities, have been at each other's throats since last summer due to an ongoing controversy over money, power, and respect.

It started with a financial audit for the 2004–05 fiscal year. During their yearly audit, the UVSS came across several receipts from Access UVic for Chinese take-out and meals at the IQ Bistro. Some meals included alcohol. The total restaurant expenditures totaled around $770, including about $120 to $150 in alcohol charges.

Shamus Reid, the UVSS director of finance, said the Chinese take-out, ordered for working meetings, is not the problem. "An expenditure on Chinese food here and there isn't a big deal," he said, "but when taken with the other restaurant expenditures it became quite a lot more."

The IQ Bistro bills were charged through an "Easy Account" that directly bills university groups. Usually UVSS groups, including constituency groups, clubs and course unions, do not use the Easy Account and must have a member pay for purchases out of their own pocket. A cheque requisition form is then filled out and if the expenditure is approved, that person is reimbursed by the UVSS.

The UVSS feels that spending student funds on restaurant meals and alcohol is inappropriate, and said they would not have approved paying for the IQ Bistro meals. "It's never okay to use student funds to purchase liquor," said Shamus Reid, the UVSS director of finance.



WESLEY SCOTT PHOTO

UVSS director of finance Shamus Reid has receipts showing Access spent between $120 and $150 on alcohol during the 2004–05 year.

UVSS chair Penny Beames echoed those views. "There had been spending on things that we didn't feel the membership would support," she said.

However, the UVSS constitution and bylaws do not contain any guidelines that specifically say what constituency groups can or cannot spend their money on, except to say that funds "may be used only for the purpose of furthering the work of Constituency Organisations."

Access feels they are in a better position than the UVSS to decide how funds can best be spent to effectively serve students with disabilities. "We understand our own needs best," said Scott Antaya, former vice president of Access.

According to Access, all the expenditures were approved by their board of directors, though Access's meeting minutes from the 2004–05 fiscal year show no record that motions were tabled or passed pre-approving the expenditures. The meals in question included groups ranging from six to 30 Access members and guests, and the group feels they were an important part of building a community for students with disabilities.

The UVSS, acting on the belief that they had to secure the Access office to "protect the integrity of the documents in there," had the locks changed on Aug. 5, 2005.

A confrontation followed on Aug. 8 between UVSS representatives and Access members who were let into their office by SUB staff.

Antaya, then vice president of Access, was one of those members. He said he was devastated and demeaned by the incident, which saw him forced out of the office; he conducted Access business on a bench outside the Student Union Building for the remainder of the day. The Access office remained closed for over a week.

The incident has been characterized by Access as overly aggressive and unwarranted. It forms the basis of a harassment complaint currently before the university's equity and human rights office. In January, Antaya made a presentation to the UVSS board asking for an apology. He received none.

Antaya and other Access members claim the UVSS is treating them differently than they would any other advocacy group. He said they are being treated as though they're incompetent, need special training in order to do ordinary things, and can't be trusted to manage their own finances.

"Name a negative stereotype about disabled people and Access has been treated that way during this past term," Antaya wrote. He and other members feel that discrimination is the root cause of the problems.

"We put our faith and trust in the UVSS but they really let us down," he said. That sentiment has been echoed by other members, who feel the organization has not been supported by the UVSS, especially in the light of a spring 2005 referendum that saw the approval of $1 from student fees to go towards Access.

Reid maintains that he responded the same way he would have to any other UVSS department. "[The action] would have been taken regardless of the advocacy group, of which organization, as long as it fell under my responsibility as director of finance," he said. "They're a part of the UVSS and operate under its bylaws, while, as the Board of Directors, we're the government and it is our job to oversee all financial records and maintain their integrity."

The issue is still being dealt with. The loophole that let constituency groups charge through their Easy Account without an external approval process has been fixed, according to Reid, but a bigger problem remains in that the UVSS Constitution does not say how constituency groups can and cannot spend money.

Reid plans to develop spending guidelines that lay out what are appropriate expenditures, and says better communication with advocacy groups is needed.

Access believes putting more controls on constituency groups will limit their ability to effectively advocate and work for students.

With files from Briony Smith and Kate Webb.

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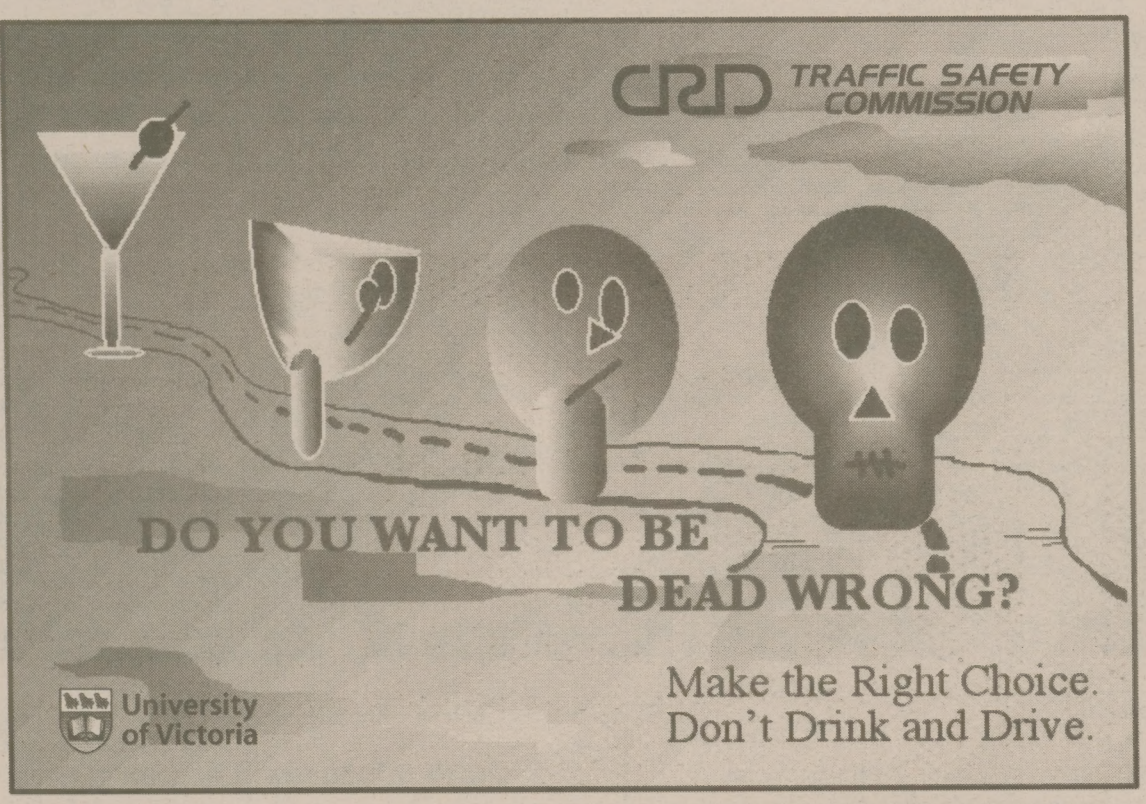

One of last year's winning submissions; by UVic student Alison Read

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'Activist' petitions for *Back to the Future* sneaks

by Micah Luxen

The moment Micheal J. Fox slipped on the futuristic Nike McFlys in the blockbuster movie *Back to the Future II*, self-proclaimed sneaker activist Al Cabino knew he had to have a pair.

According to Nike, the fantasy high-top sneakers won't be manufactured until 2015, but Cabino has already gathered over 3,500 signatures in an online petition, in hopes of getting the company to release the McFlys early.

"These are the Holy Grail of movie sneakers," said Cabino. "They were created for the film and they were never made available for the public."

The shoes have been a source of fascination for Cabino ever since he saw the movie as a child. For the past two years, he has devoted several hours a week to "sneaker culture," with the impression that he can accomplish anything if he fights hard enough for it.

"I asked, 'Can sneaker activism work?'" he said. "The answer is 'Yes, it can.'"

Once he has gathered a respectable number of signatures, Cabino will be visiting Nike headquarters.

"It's the David and Goliath story. I'm one person. It's really David against the world's biggest sneaker company. This is huge."

In addition to his petition, Cabino said that he has been working on a book about activism and has been approached to make a Michael Moore-style film about his work. Not everyone believes, though, that Cabino is justified in using the word activism for his work.

"I wouldn't think of this as activism," said UVic student Emily Pariseau. "Rather than doing something for the good of humanity, he's doing this for himself. It's not a noble cause."

Apparently, others agree.

"I do still get hate mail but there's a lot of love mail," said Cabino. "There is love and there's hate in the world but I cannot talk for angry people."

He went on to say that it takes a lot of courage for someone to come out and say, "I'm applying activism to sneakers."

Cabino argues that activism is activism and that fighting for one cause is the same as fighting for another.

"I have been approached by some [activist] causes and they want to know how I do everything. They're like 'wow,' and for them, they're fighting global warming," said Cabino, who would not divulge which causes have approached him.

One activist who has always interested Cabino is Canada's environmental guru David Suzuki.

"If David calls me, I wouldn't mind working with him," he said.

But although Cabino loves activism, he is "not one-dimensional," he said. "I also love pizza and movies."

In addition to his petitioning efforts, Cabino commissioned himself the world's first pair of chocolate sneakers earlier this year.

Cabino's cause has received an abundance of media attention from outlets including the *Calgary Herald*, *USA Today*, the *Ottawa Citizen*, and the *Montreal Gazette*.

But, despite the publicity Nike is receiving from Cabino's antics, the sneaker activist insists he does not work for the shoe giant.

PROVIDED PHOTO

The futuristic Nike McFlys are scheduled to be released to the public in 2015, but sneaker activist Al Cabino says he can't wait that long to have a pair of his own.

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Law profs criticize Harper's plan to reopen marriage debate

by Kate Webb

Law professors across the country are up in arms about newly sworn in Prime Minister Stephen Harper's plan to introduce a bill re-opening the parliamentary debate over same-sex marriage.

An open letter signed by 104 Canadian law professors was sent to Harper Jan. 16 and stated the Prime Minister's plan will lead to "legal confusion, a lack of uniformity, and unnecessary, protracted and costly litigation."

The group supported its position by citing "consistent legal precedents" that have been set in eight provinces as well as the Yukon, where provincial courts have deemed the legal exclusion of same-sex marriage rights to be unconstitutional.

The letter called on Harper to refer any legislation he puts forward to the Supreme Court first to get the Court's opinion on its constitutionality, and to drop his plans to move forward if the Court rules the legislation unconstitutional.

"If Stephen Harper goes ahead with his plan to re-open the divisive equal marriage debate, it will lead Canada into a legal swamp," said Laurie Arron, a lawyer and director of advocacy of Egale Canada, a gay, lesbian, bisexual and transsexual rights group. "Legal experts recognize this. We [Egale Canada] support their call for a Supreme Court reference and agree it's the only responsible thing for Mr. Harper to do, if he insists on rolling back equality."

Arron compared Harper's plan to the hypothetical introduction of a bill to take away women's right to work, or perhaps more accurately, he said, to a bill proposing a free vote on whether interracial or interfaith marriages should be permitted.

GRAHAM STARK ILLUSTRATION

Gay and lesbian couples have had the legal right to marry since last June, but Stephen Harper wants to reopen debate on the issue.

"Parliament is actually not supposed to pass legislation that is unconstitutional," he explained, saying that if Harper succeeded in getting a free vote in the House of Commons and his bill passed, provinces would be put in the awkward position of having to decide whether to listen to the federal government or to their own courts. In that instance, the law dictates citizens would have to go back to the courts for clarification, and would likely end up at the Supreme Court. For this reason, the law professors want Harper to consult the Court before even introducing the legislation, in order to prevent a drawn-out legal battle at the expense of taxpayers.

"Same-sex couples across Canada will take the government to court and win, but it may take a while," Arron said.

As of Feb. 1, a tabulation compiled through a *Globe and Mail* survey suggested that if there was a free vote, 153 MPs—just one vote shy of a majority—would vote in favour of marriage including homosexual couples and 136 would be opposed, leaving 19 unaccounted for.

Freda Kodar and Rebecca Johnson were the only UVic law professors among those who attached their names to the lawyers' letter.

Jeremy Webber, another UVic law professor and the Canada Research Chair in Law and Society, backed up much of Arron's legal assessment of the situation, but said it is not certain the Supreme Court would rule in favour of same-sex marriage.

"It is possible, though unlikely, that [the Court] could take a different position from that of the lower courts," he said. "Moreover, we don't know exactly what the Conservative government is going to propose . . . it seems to me that one possible legislative option would clearly be constitutional, namely to have the government get out of the 'marriage' business altogether, so that the only state-sanctioned institution was domestic partnership, both for heterosexual and same-sex unions."

On the campaign trail before the federal election of 2004, Harper stated, "I believe the court will defer to Parliament's judgment," with regard to any legislation passed on same-sex marriage.

Webber said that there have been rare occasions in the past in which Parliament has directly challenged the opinion of the court and prevailed.

In 1995, the Supreme Court struck down limitations on the disclosure of rape counselling records in sexual assault prosecutions, but the government, preferring the dissenting justices' position, framed new legislation on the basis of that dissent, and argued it was justified in doing so.

The Supreme Court of Canada ultimately accepted the arguments and upheld the new legislation, despite its former judgement.

Regardless of the fact that such exceptional avenues may be open to Harper and his cause, Webber thinks any re-opening of the debate would only unfavourably expose the Prime Minister and his supporters as being prejudiced against homosexuals.

"I think some of that opposition is the result of difficulty some people have coming to terms with relationships they simply don't understand and about which they have little knowledge," he said. "In other words, I think that prejudice is playing a clear role in this issue, but it may be a prejudice that still needs to be argued about and exposed, that is not entirely clear to all those involved in the debate."

Most Canadians seem to agree with Webber. Last June, Bill C-38 was enacted in parliament by a vote of 158 to 133, making Canada the third country in the world to legalize same-sex marriage. Since then, a survey released Nov. 29 by CBC and the private research firm Environics has found that two-thirds of Canadians believe that the issue of same-sex marriage is settled and should not be addressed again.

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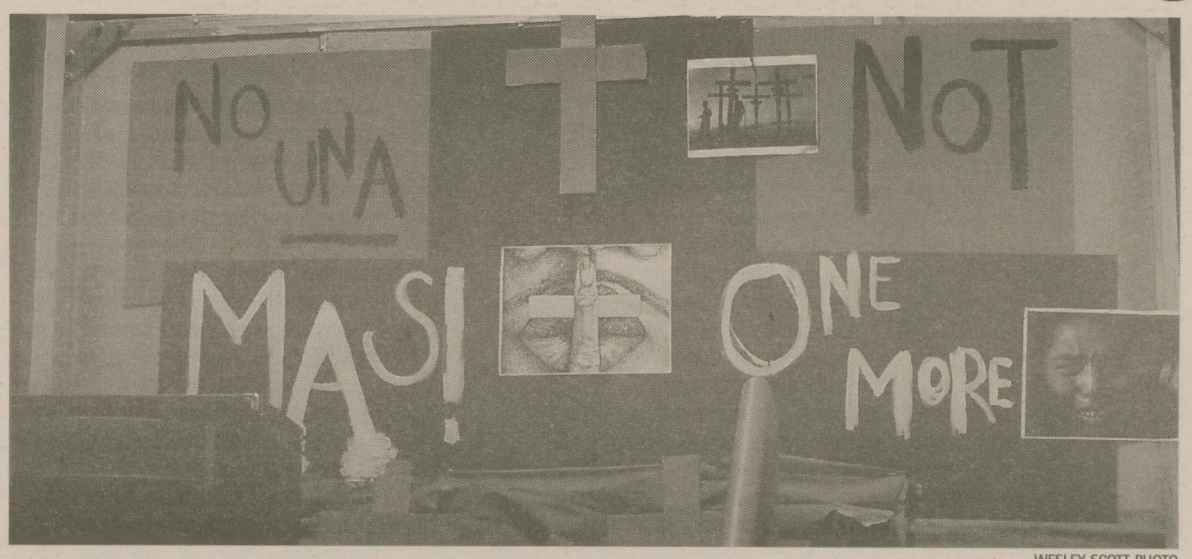
Human rights advocates speak for missing women

by Briony Smith



WESLEY SCOTT PHOTO

A display outside a Feb. 3 talk at UVic demands an end to the mysterious disapearances of Mexican women that have been occuring in the country since 1993.

Hundreds of women have mysteriously disappeared in Mexico and Canada said speakers at "Disposable Women: Connecting the Dots from Mexico to Canada."

The talk, held Feb. 3, was part of *Toward 2015: A Symposium Against Poverty*, an event hosted at UVic that brought non-governmental organizations, community members and students together to discuss actions to reduce world poverty and promote ethical consumption.

Macrina Cárdenas-Alarcón is the legislative coordinator of the Washington, D.C.-based grassroots human rights organization and lobby group Mexico Solidarity Network (MSN).

"I'm here to protest the hundreds of systematic murders of women in the border cities of Ciudad Juarez and Chihuahua City over the last 13 years," she announced at the Friday night talk. "There is only one explanation for this—their deaths are related to their status and vulnerability in society and the economy."

Members of MSN regularly travel down to Mexico to lend support to the victims' mothers and put pressure on local governments to try and solve these crimes. Police have done little—Cárdenas-Alarcón said a handful of investigations have only resulted in evidence being tainted or destroyed.

The families estimate almost 500 girls and women between the ages of six and 25 have disappeared since 1993, but don't know who is responsible or what the motive is. And with no thorough campaign against these crimes, the killers feel they can keep murdering with impunity, Cárdenas-Alarcón said.

She feels the lack of any proper investigations suggests powerful political motives, or that organized crime is involved. Another theory purports that the killings could be tied to the drug trade, since many Mexican police officers are involved in it or "look the other way."

The lack of a free press in that part of the country only worsens the matter, as the media reports the women are being killed due to associations with "bad people" or dressing provocatively. Working as maquiladoras—essentially, sweatshop workers—and living on the outskirts of towns, these women, who often have "indigenous" features and dark skin and hair, are easy targets, especially during their long, isolated commute.

Indigenous women have been exposed to racialized violence for hundreds of years, said UVic law professor Maxine Matilpi.

"We minimize the significance of racism in Canada. We like to think of ourselves as a nice beacon of human rights efforts," Matilpi said. "But Canada's colonialist history is part of our current individual reality. It's important to fight against racialized and genderized violence, especially against indigenous women, the most marginalized group."

Matilpi pointed out that the poster girls for violence against women always seem to be white girls. "No one wants prostitutes or junkies on their poster, and it's tragic to forget them," she said.

Matilpi contends that it is easy to do so, especially when the numbers are so vague. While the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) estimates 500 Aboriginal women are missing or presumed murdered in Canada, Matilpi said that police officers' practice of not writing down the ethnicity of victims of violence—for fear of being accused of racism—leads to uncertainty about the exact number of indigenous women who have been attacked.

This only contributes to the "climate of public indifference," she said, quoting former Vancouver mayor Phillip Owen, who, in response to calls for a task force to look into the many missing women on his city's Lower Eastside in 1999, said "Public money should not be used for a prostitute location service."

"People are selective about what they choose to rage against," she said. "Tibet is popular these days, but people can't seem to embrace the struggle in their own country while women are going missing all the time."

Audience member Chiinuuks Ogilvie, a graduate student in indigenous governance, said she knows this all too well. An Aboriginal woman herself, her 19-year-old niece went missing four years ago in Nanaimo—police took a month to launch a ground search for the missing woman. She has still not been found.

"This discussion is encouraging and heartwarming for me to know that we are not alone in this," she said.

A third speaker, UVic women's studies assistant professor Laura Parisi, said the invisibility of the indigenous woman is due to the fact that they are devalued and hidden. She drew parallels between the plight of the Mexican women—who, as sources of cheap and plentiful labor, are seen as disposable—and Canadian prostitutes, who are seen as useless because they do not contribute to society or the GNP.

"Capitalism is the new colonialism and these women are commodities," she said.

While the situation may seem bleak, both Parisi and Cárdenas-Alarcón believe grassroots activism—both locally and transnationally—can help, and urge students to join on-campus human rights organizations such as Amnesty International, the World University Service of Canada, or the Vancouver Island Public Interest Research Group to get involved.

"Because we do need to break the silence about these disappeared women," said Cárdenas-Alarcón, "and counteract the conspiracy."

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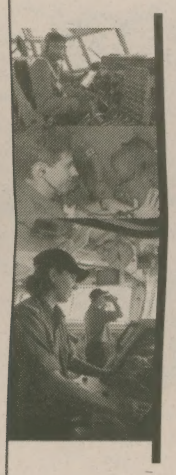

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UVic seeks 'compost champions'

New bins around campus ready UVic for future city bylaws

by Ed Pullman

UVic has introduced green compost bins around campus in an effort to reduce landfill waste.

Currently, there are three bins located around campus—one next to the Student Union Building, one outside the B-wing of Clearihue beside Petch Fountain and one in the quadrangle between the University Centre and Cornett building.

"From people bringing their lunches to school to the number of department lunchrooms, we recognized the demand for secondary consumer composting. This program will significantly increase the amount of waste diverted from Heartland landfill," said UVic sustainability co-ordinator Sarah Webb.

UVic has been composting food wastes from all campus food service outlets for over two years. The new green totes are the latest effort to reduce unnecessary waste. In the coming years, the program will be expanded to include more bins around campus, more campaigns to raise awareness about them, and composting for cluster and family housing.

Departments and units at UVic can also opt to have a mini compost bin in their lunchroom. A volunteer, or "compost champion," from the department will then bring biodegradable bags of compost to their nearest "mother" bin, and educate others about the new program. Compost champions will be entered for prize draws throughout the year.

"At the beginning of January, there were 15 campus departments or units involved in this [composting] program," Webb said. "Now we have 34 and we hope the number keeps on growing."

The list of materials welcome in the new receptacles is lengthy—cooked food, meat and dairy products, paper napkins and wood chopsticks, in addition to vegetables, fruit and teabags. The decomposition process the contents are later subjected to is called "in-vessel" composting, and is done by machine. Only materials such as metal, glass, plastics and milk cartons cannot go in.

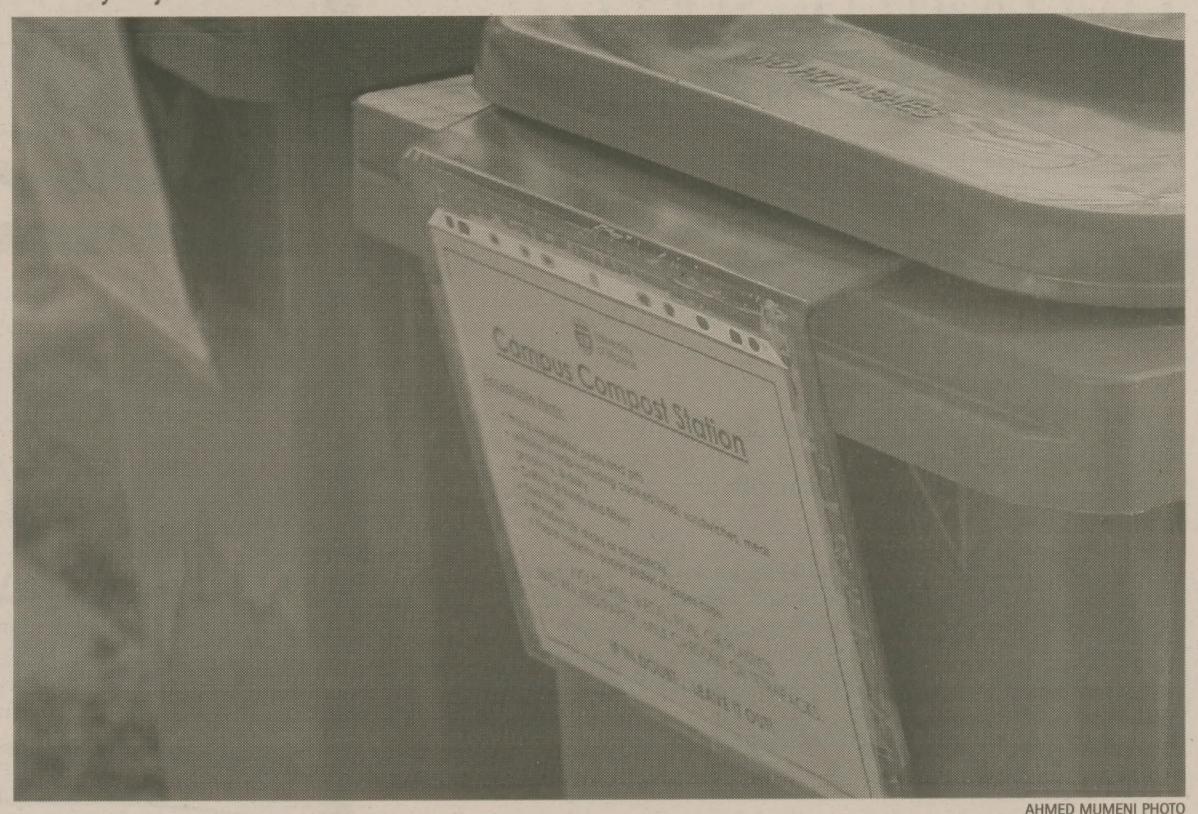
Webb said that there has only been one incident of garbage being placed in the compost bins, which occurred after the Jan. 21 SUB party.

Naomi Devine, a director of the UVic Sustainability Project (UVSP) sees the initiative as a very positive development.

"You have to cringe every time you throw food in the garbage," said Devine. "The compost bins will contribute to less waste at the university."

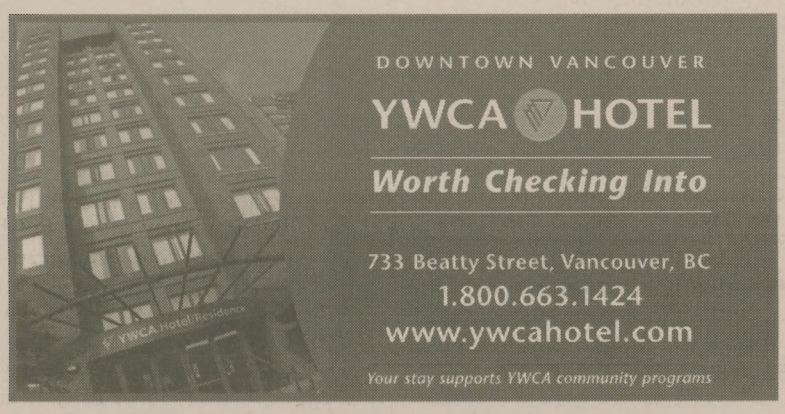
Webb sees UVic taking on a strong leadership role in regard to composting.

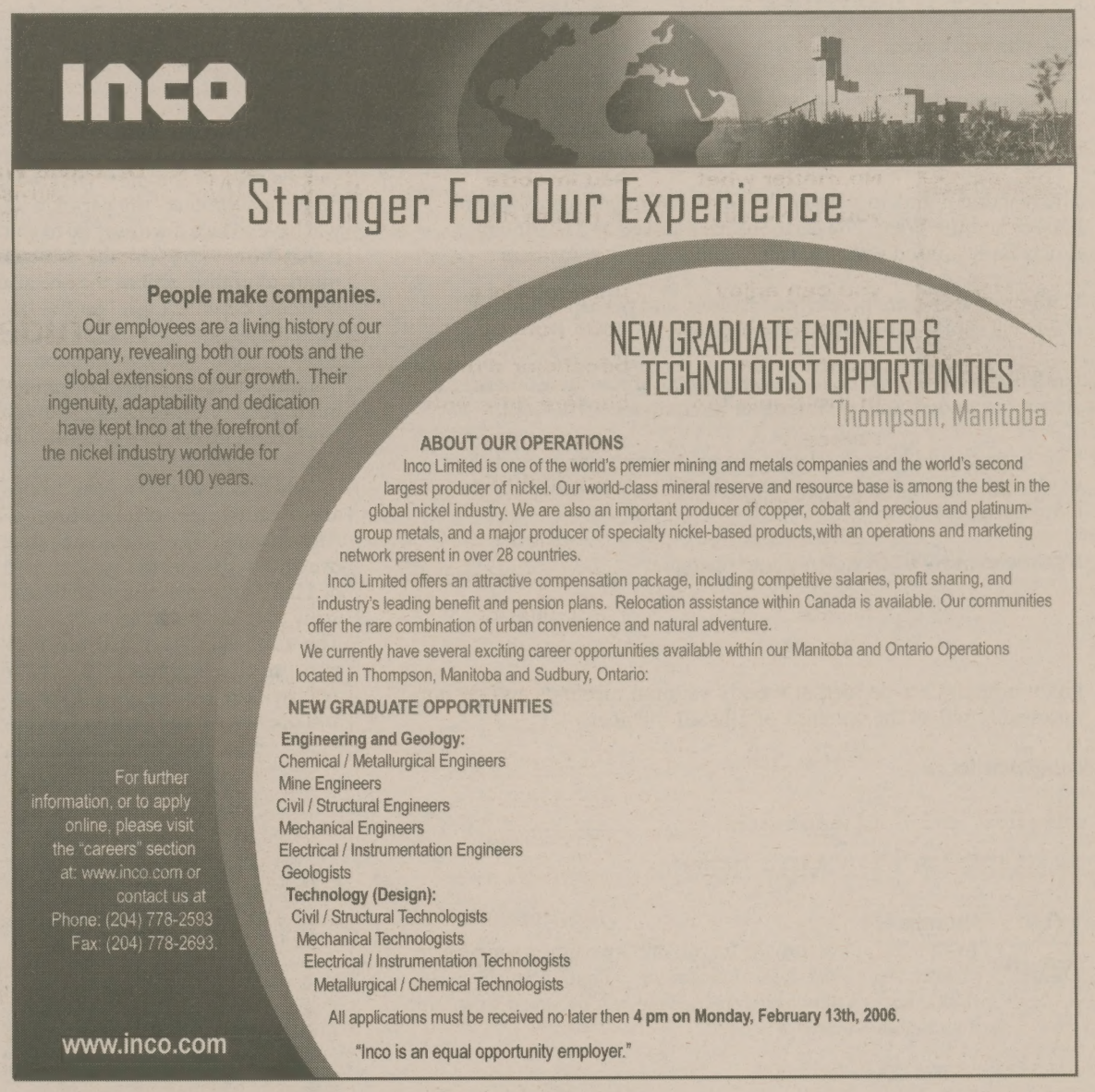
"While the CRD [Capital Regional District] has not yet banned food wastes from the landfill, future bylaws will likely come into place and UVic will be ahead of the game," she said. "By composting food wastes now, we not only demonstrate leadership, but we are prepared for future regional waste management strategies."



AHMED MUMENI PHOTO

The new green bins allow staff and students to compost organic wastes on campus. UVic food services have been helping to keep food waste out of the landfill by composting for over two years.

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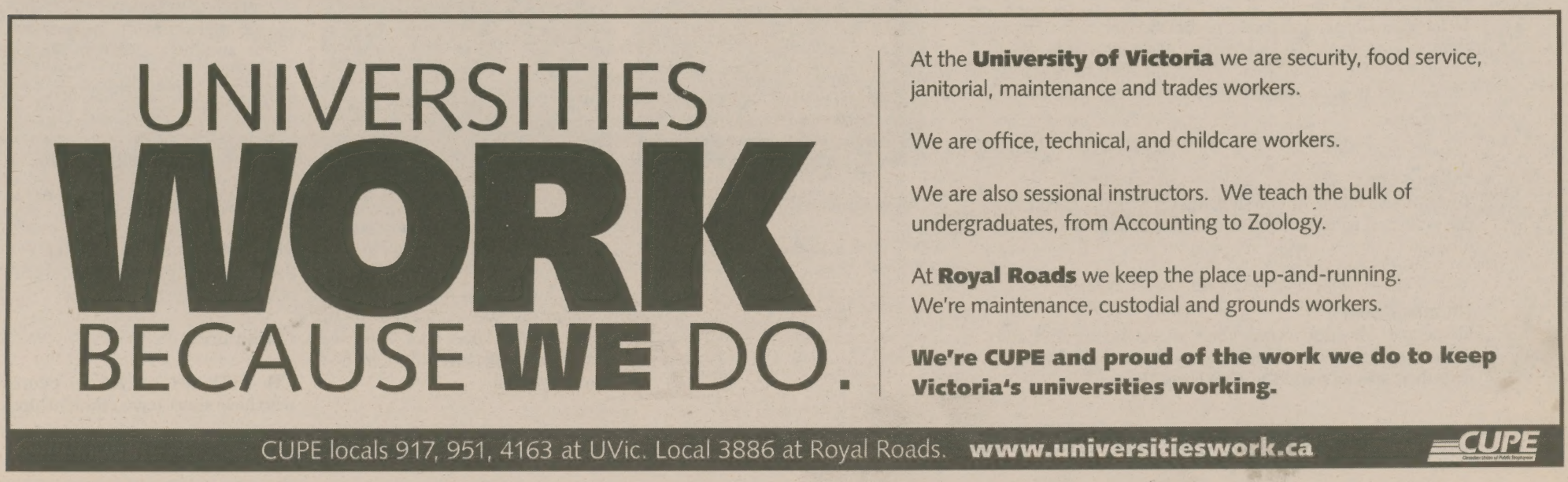
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Editorial

Freedom of speech versus blasphemy

The tensions between freedom of speech and blasphemy are running high this week, thanks to the conflict over the publication of 12 editorial cartoons about Islam.

The cartoons in question were originally printed in a Danish publication last September. They were reprinted recently in other newspapers in Europe.

Not only did they depict the Prophet in drawings—which some followers believe is idolatry and thus find both offensive and insensitive—the cartoons equated him with, among other things, terrorists and suicide bombers.

Muslims around the world were unhappy, to say the least. Death threats and calls for boycotts have ensued. Demonstrations at the embassies of the countries whose newspapers published the cartoons—a list that now includes Norway, Belgium, Germany and France—have seen guns drawn and flags in flames. People have died.

The problem hasn't been limited to Europe. In Jordan, Jihad Momani and Hisham Khalidi were accused of insulting religion under Jordan's press and publications law after their papers reprinted the cartoons.

Momani, editor of the weekly *Shihan* paper in Jordan, was fired. He was also charged with insulting religion under the country's press and publications laws, charges that were later dropped.

"Muslims of the world be reasonable," wrote Momani in his editorial. "Who offends Islam more? A foreigner who endeavours to draw the prophet as described by his followers in the world, or a Muslim with an explosive belt who commits suicide in a wedding party in Amman or elsewhere."

The man has a point.

The cartoons themselves are not the real problem. Yes, they can be seen as offensive and/or insensitive, but that's not a reason to turn to violence. Most people, including most Muslims, agree.

The reaction points to a larger, deeper problem between Muslim nations and the West. The cartoons have served as a flashpoint, a timely topic around which to rally.

Until those issues are properly addressed, and perhaps resolved, there will continue to be protests and violence.

Until both sides can tolerate the other point of view, until there is an attempt at understanding, there will be clashes.

This issue should be more than a chance to point fingers and cling to ideology, whether it is about the principle of free speech or the blasphemy.

It's time to move from violence into dialogue.

Editorial topics are decided at weekly editorial meetings and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of all staff members.

edit@martlet.ca

THUMBS UP | THUMBS DOWN

Thumbs Up
To the B.C. government for finally unveiling their plan to protect the Great Bear Rainforest. Thanks to the plan, 18,000 sq. km of wildlife and foliage will be saved from unsustainable logging practices.

Thumbs Down
To Stephen Harper and the Conservatives for even thinking about taking away the right to same-sex marriage. How would they like it if we took away their right to make discriminatory policies, hmm? Would you like that Harper, would ya?

Thumbs Up
To so many Haitian voters showing up to actually vote that the polls had to remain open four hours later than scheduled.

Thumbs Down
To people who don't wash their sheets before and after Valentines Day. What if there's a murder and CSI shows up with their special semen-finding lamp? Eww . . .

EDITORIAL CARTOON | SCRAPING THE BOTTOM

ANTHONY FRATTAROLI GRAPHIC

LETTERS

Nationalist attitude not appreciated

Jared Watson certainly has proven that nationalism is not just a poisonous relic of the past. He confidently asserts that "the paradox we will have to face if we ever go to war is that the country with the stronger multiculturalism will be the one at a strategic disadvantage. "So the basic acceptance of other cultures goes out the window as soon as Canada needs a strategic advantage in its efforts to devastate foreign lands through force of arms and finance capital?

Canada is at war. Canadian troops are occupying and fighting in Afghanistan. The Canadian state overthrew the elected government of Haiti, and now the RCMP and army prop up the unelected regime. The Canadian navy actively took part in the starvation blockade against Iraq for the past 13 years and operates in the Persian Gulf today.

The nationalist attitudes expressed by Watson's article are the same ones that the Canadian state tries to exploit during wartime. Attention is shifted away from the true cause of war, the capitalist economy, and onto its victims, the international community. The chauvinist views expressed by Watson are insulting to the international community at UVic and lie dangerously close to outright racism.

-Jeremy Hall

Values don't need religion

As the founder and president of the Carpe Diem club, I would likee to respond to David Karp's opinion piece entitled "Give the religious right a chance." First I would like to thank David for his views. Free speech and academic dialectic is a bulwark of our society, and frequently trodden upon when religion and politics mix. There was a time when religion and politics were fused—it was called the Dark Ages.

I would also like to agree with him that many politicians are lacking in values. What I would like to strenuously take issue with is his central thesis that VALUES = RELIGION. One does NOT need religion to hold a complete value system. The Carpe Diem club is founded upon just such a non-religious value system: secular humanism.

If you consider yourself non-religious, but take exception to the claim that one needs to believe in a kooky ghost in the sky to have values, I encourage you to look into secular humanism, and the Carpe Diem club in particular. Our website is www.geocities.com/uviccarpediem. We are an existence proof that you do not need religion to hold a strongly moral world view!

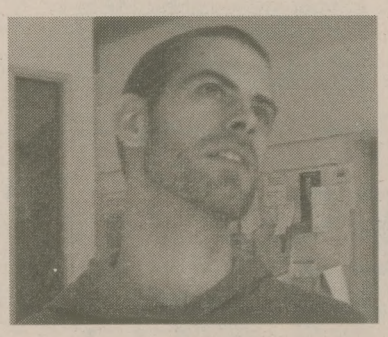
-Derek Madson

on the spot

THIS WEEK'S QUESTION:

How did you, or would you, approach the issue of STDs with a sexual partner?

BY SETH COOPER & MELANIE GREENE PHOTOS BY MELANIE GREENE

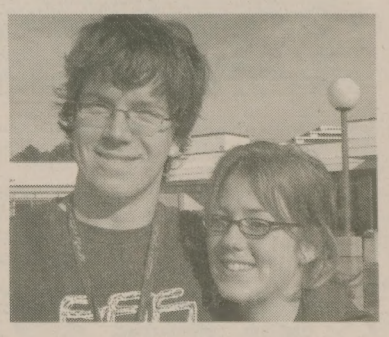


David Lumsden

DL: With a 10-foot pole.

Michael Langdon

ML: I would definitely rubber up, make sure that I'm protected. I would know who my partner is; I wouldn't just automatically do it. I'd make sure I'm sober too. You have to be frank, you can't hide it, it's just too dangerous.



Rob Lewis

RL: Just try to talk them about it. If they can't be open with you, there's obviously some shady issues.

Caitlin Brice

CB: STDs get carried by people who have short-term relationships.

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The ups and downs of sex

A pre-Valentines Day reflection

by Melanie Greene

Sexually transmitted diseases are more common than most people think. Rates of syphilis and chlamydia are on the rise, and while other STD rates aren't increasing, the diseases are still popping up.

We live in a world full of sexual promiscuity and indulgence, which started when the sexual revolution got grooving in the '60s. Herpes and genital warts and AIDS—oh, my!

Many people believe the sexual revolution occurred because of the introduction of birth control pills. With the ability to have sex without conceiving a child, men and women began to express their sexual desires more openly.

The implications of this revolution are wide and varied. People openly discuss sexual partners (many people even have a "list" to keep track of the number of partners they've had), and sex is a huge part of the consumer industry.

MuchMusic plays non-stop videos portraying horny women in scant clothing and chauvinist males controlling them.

Advertisements use the possibility of attracting sexual partners to sell products.

The general public, particularly the university crowd, seem to be completely comfortable with sexual promiscuity and "hooking up."

Women are free to express themselves as sexual beings with minds and desires of their own (although the term "slut" is still used for women who get what they want in the sack).

All of these things are results of the sexual revolution, but it has had other ramifications as well.

The things people don't openly talk about, and often feel uncomfortable even thinking about, are STDs and the rising abortion trend, which are byproducts of the revolution.

Imagine you're taking a shower and decide its time to check the equipment—You've heard of herpes and genital warts, but there's no way you'd get anything like that. After all, it's not like you're a slut. Well, lo and behold, there are some funny little bumps down there that weren't there before.

Now what? What happens when number 16 on your list passes you their genes or their STD?

So you go to a clinic and explain that you're not a slut, always use a condom, and you don't know how it happened, but there it is. The doctor tells you it's fairly common and treatable, so try not to worry too much. They'll tell you it's true—you're not a slut, and STDs are common, especially among the university crowd. STDs are not dirty, and if we're going to have human contact in the form of sex, they're going to get around.

Sex, and everything that comes along with it, has been a huge part of our culture for a long time. But like I said, it's a commodity now. The media uses sex to sell, but the media won't tell you STDs are normal. When's the last time you heard a song on the radio about a trip to the doctor to your get blisters treated? Never. It doesn't sound pretty, and it won't sell beer or cars.

So, is it our culture's tendency to ignore sore and itchy genitals? Or is the sexual revolution itself to blame for the rise in STDs? I'd give some blame to both.

The sexual revolution came with contraception and new medicines to prevent unwanted pregnancies. But, things like herpes, genital warts, and AIDS became more of a problem due to people taking on more partners. Condoms became more readily available, but condoms break and don't fully protect against STDs even when intact.

Herpes and genital warts are treatable, but they are viruses that plant their DNA in your body—they don't go away. AIDS does get a lot of attention, but not as an STD that's out there among our university peers. It is not curable and is deadly. These things are a reality of our sexual practices, but are often ignored. Those who catch an STD often feel stigmatized and alone because it's not openly talked about as a common reality for our generation.

So, let's talk about these things. If you've got one, there's nothing to be ashamed of, lots of other people have them too. Let's also be careful. Happy and safe sex to you all!

The Hudson's Bay Company is gone

Selling Canadian identity to the highest bidder

by Matthew Gauk

A few weeks ago American businessman Jerry Zucker, owner of Maple Leaf Heritage Investments, became the majority shareholder of the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC). Zucker was the minority shareholder for years, and after a long battle with HBC, a takeover deal was reached.

For the next few days, the radio waves and newspapers were full of angry callers and letters to the editor spouting righteous indignation about the sale of Canada's heritage to the States.

Political hacks and columnists responded immediately, chastising these nascent nationalists for having abandoned the Bay years ago. Furthermore, it was pointed out, in a free market economy, a corporation has to grow or go bankrupt, and the HBC is, after all, just a corporation and deserves no special treatment.

But these critics missed the point entirely. The Canadian people can be forgiven their intransigence in the face of overwhelming American commercial might. They don't know what's good for them, so they have to be shown. It's exactly for the reasons the columnists pointed out—that Canadians had long given up the Bay in favour of Wal-Mart and Costco—that we need these Canadian-owned retail sales chains.

The consumer isn't so much shaped by independent reasoning as by outside forces like American business interests, and we are therefore gravely mistaken when we think that the abandonment of the Bay is an indicator of its own failure. It isn't. It's an indicator of the consumer's failure. We can't let this benchmark takeover pass us by and excuse it by saying that this is how the consumer chose to act.

Zucker himself acknowledges the gravity of this issue. Just look at the name of his company, Maple Leaf Heritage Investment. Heritage. There's the rub. It may as well be called Buying Up Canadian History.

How can we—the federal government and, by extension, the people—accomplish this without interfering too much in the free market system?

Stepping down from my socialist soapbox, and keeping away from the language of dreaded corporate welfare, I'd have liked to see the Canadian government do whatever it could to preserve the national identity of this company, this organization, that is so closely tied to the country's foundations.

The government couldn't have forced the HBC as a private company to do anything, but it should have pushed the HBC board of directors to find a solution that isn't so distasteful to the vast majority of Canadians.

The economic viability of the HBC plays a major role, obviously, in its future. But if an agreement could have been reached to keep ownership in our country, it would have needed to be accompanied by a media campaign to motivate consumers to buy Canadian. If more Canadians gave a second thought to where their money was ending up, maybe there would be fewer corporations with ties to our nationhood heading south.

The HBC sale is a done deal. Foreign ownership of private companies is a common, and indeed necessary, fact of life in the modern global economy. But the line has to be drawn somewhere, and the HBC would have probably been a good place to do it.

What happened to the Boy Scouts?

Affirmative action is not always the best policy

by Kim Armstrong

I could have sworn that there used to be some sort of club for boys, in which boys could do boy things with other boys. In essence, No GirLz aLLowEd.

Apparently, though, these miniature male bonding sessions were deemed rather sexist, don'cha know, and the invasion of the second X chromosome began.

Although unaccompanied by spooky theme music, this episode should scare the follicles of any equal rights activist into premature grey. This is because Girl Guides, note the adjective, is still proudly for one gender only. Apparently—and, my gosh, what a shocker—sometimes girls just need time to be girls. No kidding.

But why don't boys?

The thing is, the fact that women were historically oppressed by men and denied equal rights doesn't give them permission to get revenge now. And this applies across the board.

Being a member of a group that has traditionally suffered under the heel of the oppressor's shiny, black, high-buttoned shoe does not give anyone the right to preferential treatment now. That's the thing about equality. It means that everyone is treated equally.

The great activists of the ages didn't fight to be given special acknowledgement because they had boobs, an accent, a slightly darker skin tone, or liked people with the same equipment they had. They fought for the right to be treated just like everyone else. As long as the spotlight is kept trained on the boobs, the accent or the dark skin, equal treatment just isn't going to happen.

Take as an example the hiring policies that wish their workforce to be representative of the community in which it resides. Whether this means striving for a predominantly Hispanic police force in a predominantly Hispanic neighbourhood, or for a one-to-one ratio of male and female politicians, this policy undermines the very foundations on which it was formed.

Minority status cannot be a qualification for anything but membership in that minority group. Hiring someone on the basis of being part of a minority group keeps that fact as the number one identifier of that person. It doesn't mean that they will do a better job, or that they have special skills because of it. For example, not all people of Hispanic descent speak Spanish, while some people not of Hispanic descent do.

Policies like these encourage assumptions based on race or gender that are no less harmful because they may give the bearer of these characteristics opportunities rather than not. This is no different than hiring someone based on the fact that they are, say, white or male.

The flip side of this rather tarnished coin is that flagrant abuses of the rights of the former oppressors are both tacitly and overtly condoned. A blonde, blue-eyed Caucasian applying for our hypothetical police force may find that he or she is passed over for the job, despite stellar qualifications, simply because he or she is not Hispanic.

In the end, the solution is simple. Give everyone the opportunity for a job, and leave the choice of whether or not they take advantage of it up to them.

Give the boys back their tree house, and let the girls who wish to learn archery or woodcarving instead of beadwork petition the leader of their "girls only" club to change its ways.

And everyone just be excellent to one another. It's not as hard as you may think.

murder you

With eleven vitamin and supplement pills in one hand and a vanilla flavoured whey protein drink in the other, I stride quickly from the kitchen back towards my computer workstation. I place the glass on the desktop, pull a hair from my mouth and it's a grey one. Thirty-five and all ready an old maid, I scoff. Pills balled in my left fist, I begin to type one-handed.

> Nathan raised Dawn's head off the mattress, gently looping a yellow and green argyle scarf under her neck. Kissing her gently on her forehead, he tightened his grip on the scarf ends.

I tilt my head back and drop five pills past my lips and quickly wash them down with the chalky liquid. Pure nutrition to be sure, all I really need. It could use some flavour, but I've been consuming pills and power shakes for so long, taste is a thing long forgotten.

When my appetite returns, I'm going to eat till I burst—if it ever comes back.

Fingers return to keyboard.

> As always, the silkiness over-rode the pressure applied to her windpipe. Dawn bit her lip sharply. He unyieldingly cinched her silk noose and his hand moved to the damp hunger of her loins.
> A good buy, she thought — this was the first time she'd bought the scarves in bulk. Sure, they were cheaply woven, but the silk was thin and stretchy. Her arms and legs were bound to the four corners of the bed by scarves of the same pattern.

My boney right index finger hovers over the delete key, but I don't strike it. Swallowing the remaining pills and drinking the rest of the shake, I glance from the word processing window to the top corner of the computer screen. The digital display reads 1:57 p.m. in bold font. Only twenty hours remaining till Kate will want the manuscript.

I breathe in deeply and smell what I think is peanut butter. Now that's an odd thing, I haven't eaten peanut butter since I started my vitamin and supplement food replacement routine months ago. Come to think of it, I don't even think there's a jar in the pantry.

> Dawn wondered if his wife knew about them yet, if she had an asphyxiation fetish too. He hardly ever talked about her. All Dawn knew was wifey had already used up her One Murder years ago. The affair would have been even more dangerous if Dawn had to fear being legally murdered by the wife of her sexual strangler.

The computer chimes and a video-message pops on screen.

Inside the video window, Reiger's rugged face is framed by thinning sandy-blonde curls. He winks at me. His brows furrow. Tiny spatters of red clay speckle his forehead. What does he smell like, I wonder. I force a smile in return, but he isn't acknowledging it.

"Good day my unexpressive friend. And what do you want?" I ask. He continues to grin dumbly. "Look Reiger, I don't have time for your, 'I can see straight through you nonsense.' Really this is not a good time for—"

I cut myself off, laugh at my stupidity, and reach for the camera and microphone cube built into the top of the monitor. I switch them on.

"Well hello there," Reiger's voice booms from the speakers, I cringe and quickly jut my arm out to turn the volume down.

He smiles wider showing his teeth—white, perfectly shaped, the two front ones look fake, but I've never bothered to ask if they are.

"There you are," he croons. "You haven't showered, yet still you're lookin' foxy in that robe I sent you." He pulls back and sits down at his desk.

"How do you know I haven't showered? You know I'm not body conscious, but do I look that bad?"

"No. Hair's just a little stringy." Reiger picks dried clay from underneath his fingernails. "Hangs too straight past your shoulders, makes you appear even skinnier than you really are."

Skinny, there's that word again. If he asks me again if I have an eating disorder I'm going to scream. Eight months ago when he asked to see the pictures of me when I was fat, I nearly deleted him from my contact list. I had sent him photos of myself as a child and a teenager just to prove to him that I wasn't a diet girl.

Still, he'd fatten me up if we ever got together in the flesh, or so I'd like to believe. Make it so I had an appetite again.

He glances over his shoulder. "I'm working hard for a Sunday just like you. Ah, the never-ending life of us entrepreneurs! No rest for the self-employed. Hey, your deadline's coming quick, huh?"

He must have widened the scope of his camera view since our last interlude. Over his coverall clad shoulder I see a production line of several large, pink, outdoor lawn vases set on the floor next to the sliding garage door. A tabloid-sized printout of the pic of myself I e-mailed last week is tacked to the wall above them. Vases are probably near dry. Soon to be set enough to receive his brushstrokes. I wonder if his house ever becomes a pottery storage facility? I wonder what his house looks like, period. Messy or clean, art nouveau or art-Ikea. Why haven't I asked him to e-mail pics of his place? I've sent him at least twenty of my condo—not that there's much to see. Just white walls, black leather sofa set, glass-topped tables made of pressboard, a few knick-knacks and, of course, my computer station.

> Nathan pulled hard on the scarf ends. Her breath caught in her throat for an endless moment. He eased up and Dawn reluctantly expelled a short burst of air. Greedily, she drew in another lungful. Nathan's pupils enlarged with the power she offered him willingly.

"Diane? Can you hear me?" he asks.

My hands stop typing. "Yeah, trying to finish my book," I say breaking from my stupor. "... Looks like you have a contract to fill too."

"What're you saying? This isn't a good time?" He is unzipping his coveralls. His nose crinkles; mouth turns flat. "Too late now. You should've rescheduled our two o'clock."

He pulls his arms out of the sleeves of his coveralls and strips-down to his torso. His pecs are clean-shaven, the weights of his hoop-ring piercings making his nipples turn downward.

"I'm not a cyber-sex trade worker," I blurt, feeling my stomach roll.

I click on the word processor window so it covers up most of the video-messenger window. I re-read the last couple of lines.

"C'mon lover, it's being three days since the last time," he pipes up, interrupting my reading.

"I can't," I reply. And it's the truth, though I wish I could accept his invitation to procrastinate and masturbate. Although, the last time he was this eager he finished too soon and wasn't much use to me. I had to shut his screen down and search the hard drive for a recording of our previous session in order to finish.

"Really Reiger, I've got only twenty-two hours until Kate calls and asks, 'Where's the manuscript you had six months to write?' It won't cut it to tell her, 'Oh Jeez, I never got around to it. I had too many trysts with my online lover'—that's not going to be a problem is it?'"

"Yes, but you're too tense to work efficiently," he says in that sweet baritone of his. "I can see it in your posture. How about I give it another try in twenty minutes?"

I shrug and turn down the speaker volume to indicate to him that I will elaborate no further. I start to type.

> Stretching his naked body over hers, he entered her completely with a single stroke. The bones of their pelvises ground together furiously as he tightened the scarf and her breath again yearned for release.

My fingers stall on the keypad, my stomach growls.

Withdrawing a cigarette and lighter from my robe pocket, I light it and drag deeply. What kind of editor is Kate to have actually listened to that pitch of mine?—'A not-so-distant future society where the fear of being murdered has rendered the crime obsolete. Yes, it'll be in the same vein as Orwell's 1984 or Huxley's Brave New World, but with contemporary erotic elements.'

I take another drag, watch the cherry burn. Just because I managed to say it with a straight face, didn't mean Kate had to believe that I wasn't full of shit.

I sneak a look at the video messenger window and consider asking him to fly to the West Coast from Cape Breton. How nice it would be to rub noses, see the blue of his eyes firsthand, go to a restaurant and eat with him. But he wouldn't come and, anyway, I haven't been with a real man in fifteen years.

I stub out the cigarette in the vagina-shaped ceramic ashtray Reiger had mailed to me last Christmas. My hands click on the keyboard.

> He started to thrust his hips and she accepted him eagerly, while her face reddened and her heart pounded in her ears. She'd never seen him so aggro before and she began to wonder if Nathan was losing himself in the fantasy?
> As if to answer her mental query, he reefed viciously on the ends of the silken noose. Her thoughts became muddled and murky as her passion was

ur hunger

starting to become sated. She blinked, and her body convulsed uncontrollably.
I'm going to be his one M, she realized, more with surprise than horror. Dawn climaxed and died.
Fin.

My eyes flit to the visible part of the video screen. Reiger, all taut skin and muscle, appears to have already started.

I raise the speaker volume again, and click for the video screen to enlarge and fill the entirety of the screen. He has raised the camera and tilted it down to give me a bird's eye view. Naked, he grips his turgid penis.

"Has it been twenty minutes already?" I ask, knowing that only ten have passed.

"Shut up and fuck with me," he says, and starts to stroke.

"You truly suck up my productive hours like nothing else," I quip. "It's a good thing you're not here in person. I'd never get anything done."

He doesn't take the bait. Doesn't wax poetically about how he'd like to touch me, doesn't say he yearns to feel my hands on him. And I want to tell him this isn't enough anymore. I want to shut down the messenger program and forget that we'd ever connected, but Reiger's boyish need is too much of a turn-on.

Unknowingly, I have placed my hand on my breast. He strokes faster, but he isn't grunting or groaning, he hasn't made a sound in months. My fingers grasp my nipple and squeeze. I stand, and looking into the camera I let my robe drop. His eyes are fixated on me and mine are on him. I let a hand find my pleasure place. I'll have to be fast. Keep pace with him.

He's not going for a marathon session, that's for sure. Still, looks like he's building for a big-bang orgasm. Reiger's exuberance arouses me and I feel myself rising as well. I peak, I cum, and when I finish I see that he's already dressing back into his coveralls. I reach down, grab my robe, wipe my sticky fingers on the sleeve, and put it on.

I minimize the video-messenger screen, open the file named Chapter One and light another cigarette. My first try at the book's ending came too easily. I reread its beginning to see why.

Nathan had been eyeing her since she was hired last week. Gawking and then looking away like a frightened doe when she would unabashedly stare back at him. Now he was standing beside her desk. Running his fingers through his thick, unkempt hair.
"The Right to Life without Murder advocacy group is organizing a worldwide virtual protest on Saturday, and I'm thinking of writing Monday's editorial about the One Murder law's affects on our everyday life," he said, trying to look as if he weren't attempting to get a read on her.
"Sound idea. But keep in mind that I'm just a secretary," she smirked, and purposefully crossed her legs to indicate to him that she had caught him looking.

The video messenger window pops-up. Reiger is now completely dressed. He shakes a small can of paint in one hand and blows a kiss to me with the other.

"You were wonderful, Diane. Really, you are the sexiest thing online—Oh, Jeez. I'm sorry. You don't need me to intrude on your life when you're busy. Okay, I'll let you get back to work."

I want to explain to him that he's a part of my life, but it would be a lie. "Want me to turn off my camera?" I ask.

He shakes his head, not really listening and walks out of the view of the camera.

"You want me to turn you off?" I call. He does not respond.

Dawn knew he'd been working up the courage to ask her if she'd murdered yet, she'd seen it in the faces of men before. But of course, it would be illegal for him to ask. And, besides it was the one secret she'd never reveal. Her father taught her not to let her eyes give it away. Said her life may depend on it. That only she could master her future.

"How come you never tried to get together with me?" I ask repeatedly until he returns to his computer seat.

"You mean in person?" It's obvious that he never thought I'd ever bring it up as an option. "Well, I don't know why...I guess with the physical distance between us and—"

I interrupt. "We could've flown to meet each other, Reiger. We could have taken the train or the bus."

"Why are you speaking of us in the past tense? So, I like what we have now, is that bad? What brought this on?"

This time she refused to answer.

When everyone you meet may be a threat to your person, it's important to keep them wondering about your One M status. That's one of the reasons why Dawn paid an underground data security firm more than she could afford to ensure her past and present personal info was untraceable.
"You know," he said, his nervous smile somehow making him appear more handsome to her than before. "I read in Psychology Magazine that incidents of heart attacks due to stress have risen 90 percent since the law was enacted." He looked around the office before blowing her a kiss.

"Diane, we've been video-messaging for two years now. We have a nice little thing here. Why should we complicate it? I love you as you are.

She pretended to not notice his advance. "Yes, but an editorial of that sort might not go over that smoothly with your readers. Average people don't like to read about the law. It does its job. It scares most of them into behaving."
"So, you don't agree with those who think that it's wrong that it is the fear of becoming someone's M that makes us all get along?"
"Well, Mr. Stewart—"
"Nathan," he interrupted.
"Nathan," she said, smiled at his clumsy forwardness. "Prior to the One M law, crimes of every type were 92 percent higher—I read that in your paper, so that must be true."
"Obviously," he replied.
"Besides, action and consequence are one of the laws of the natural world, so how could it be wrong?" Her eyes suddenly became fixated on his tie. "Nathan, is that a silk tie?"
"Yes," he answered. "Why do you ask?"

Suddenly, I stop reading. I rise to my feet, and walk to the double-door kitchen pantry. My hand opens the door, almost without my consent. Maybe it's my body desperate for fuel. Or maybe it's just that I'm hungry for something, anything in my life. I peruse the meager shelf selection: canned peas, sardines in mustard, dried pasta, and, miracles upon miracles, a jar of smooth peanut butter. I return to my computer and place the jar on the desk. I reopen the final chapter and scroll down to the last page.

Stretching his naked body over hers, he entered her completely with a single stroke. The bones of their pelvises ground together furiously as he tightened the scarf and her breath again yearned for release. Suddenly the suffocating bliss turned to agony. It was somehow different than the other times.
He started to thrust his hips and she accepted him routinely, her face reddened and her heart pounded in her ears. She'd never seen him so clearly before, and she began to wonder why she hadn't opened her eyes before.

Reiger's voice loses its smoothness, "Do you have a boyfriend now? Someone you met at cyber-singles?"

I avoid looking at the video screen. I glance at the peanut butter on the desk. "Yep, you caught me. But there's actually two of them. I'm not really even trying to finish my book. Go to www.double_teamed.com and you can watch the action live for just $10.95 a month. I know you'd rather not invest anything in seeing me, but if you're in the neighbourhood..."

Seeing that she was leaving the fantasy, he reefed viciously on the ends of the silken noose. Using all her strength she tugged her right arm loose from its silken restraint. She shouted for him to stop and raised her arm, signaling him to cease. He plainly understood her shrill command and saw the gesture, but chose to dismiss their meaning. He hadn't finished yet.

"What does this mean?" he asks. "Are you really not satisfied with what we are anymore—"

"Yes, I need more sustenance, I mean substance. I'm ready for something real. Someone I can sink my teeth into." I delete him from my video messenger contact list.

I'm going to be his One M, Dawn realized. With a last gasp of strength she threw back her arm and worked her hand under the pillow her head rested on and found her gun.

Grasping the peanut butter jar, I spin off the lid. Finally, the hunger returns.

ANTHONY FRATTAROLI GRAPHICS

ADVOCACY COLUMN | ACCESS UVIC!

by Rose Mariana Robb

Have you heard the one about the banker and the university?

Last week I attended two panel discussions about disability. One was sponsored by the Faculty of Social Sciences here at the University of Victoria and the other was sponsored by an investment bank, BMO Nesbitt Burns. Not unexpectedly, there was a great contrast between the two.

One institution was way out in front, bursting with new knowledge, passionate about finding ways to develop the talent in every person, dedicated to removing every possible barrier to achievement and welcoming and encouraging disabled people. That would be the bank.

I believe that universities have a critical role to play in democracies and special obligations regarding accessibility and inclusion. Banks, on the other hand, do not.

So how it is that BMO Nesbitt Burns is so far out ahead of the University of Victoria?

Why is a bank and not a university in the lead?

I wish the two events had been combined. The university instructor who asked questions on Friday could have learned so much about the human rights of disabled people from the investment banker on Saturday. He asked: "Are we really doing students with disabilities any favours providing all these accommodations?" One assumption in this question is that in the "real world" outside this haven of understanding and acceptance, accommodation is not available. Another

is that accommodation is a favour, which it is not.

The professor wondered if the university should recommend that students with learning disabilities go to special institutions that will drill, drill, drill them until they learn to read like the rest of us. An assumption at the heart of this question is that the person can and should be fixed. The disability can be made to go away, if only the disabled person will submit to enough remedial work, or corrective surgery, or rehabilitation or medication. It is the antithesis of the pragmatic willingness to accept difference displayed by the bank.

"I have an employee who reads using a software program for people with learning disabilities," said the banker. "He is our highest performer at Nesbitt Burns, internationally, making over a million a year. Twenty years ago he'd have been lucky to find work in a factory."

On Friday we heard that shabby, unheated, uncomfortable 'S' Hut is the best that the University of Victoria can afford to provide for hundreds of students who require accommodation for their disabilities when they write exams. Oh dear.

On Saturday we heard about a BMO employee who had a sleeping disorder called narcolepsy. In an office tower in Toronto, where commercial space is spectacularly expensive, BMO built a special "sleep room". The employee uses the "sleep room" 20 minutes every three hours, and no longer falls asleep in the rest of his workday.

When BMO got tired of finding one of their best people asleep at his desk they didn't fire him, or try to fix him either. The bank responded to narcolepsy as a challenge for the company to meet, not a personal misfortune.

I'll close with a statement I particularly liked from one of the panel discussions. I'll let you guess whether it was someone from a bank or a university who said it.

"We don't all have the same talent, but we all deserve the same opportunities to develop the talent we have."

Rose Mariana Robb is the director of Access UVic. Access can be reached at 472-4389.

AURAL AFFAIRS

A day for bad boyfriends (and girlfriends) to shine

by Jake Sandberg

Let's face it—if your lover really was amazing, you wouldn't be looking forward to Valentine's Day. If you are one of the people I'm speaking about, chances are you haven't planned shit. Well, not to worry—hopefully this column will inspire you, or at least give you an idea to steal and call your own!

But before you steal one of these ideas and slap your name on it, remember that people want to see some effort.

Love might actually be the word I'm looking for. Also, if you are like me and will most likely be alone on Valentine's Day, don't feel sad—if it were a real holiday, we would get the day off. Just ignore it and move on, or go drink with friends until your night is equally as entertaining.

A dinner. It's simple but lacks any attempts at effort, so try to jazz it up. Try going above and beyond and bring the dinner to your place along with some candles, John Mayer, and a home-cooked meal.

A picnic. This is by far one of the cheesiest ideas out there, but if you can pull off, I swear it works. If you can't do it during the day for whatever reason, take it indoors. Light a fire, get a warm blanket, and some sort of small shrubbery for effect. As far as food goes, Safeway can pretty much provide you with everything you need. A mini-cake, fruit salad, some crackers and spreads (try the artichoke and spinach dip), assorted sandwiches and wine will see you through the night.

A night on the ice. Yes, skating is high on the cute factor and great for young couples to kindle the romance. Can't skate? No problem—it provides a good excuse to cling to your honey.

A hot chocolate and a walk to remember. It's cheap, easy, and a great way to blow about an hour. But, dear god, don't do just this—make this your after-dinner plan. See previous ideas.

As far as gifts go, flowers and chocolate are classics, but try to find out favourite colours/flavours beforehand.

Another solid gift is a photograph of you and your sweetheart together in a nice little frame. But make sure it's a good picture, because chances are it's going to be in plain view haunting you every time you come over.

On a closing note, if you do get busted using something you read here, look into your lover's eyes, pause, and repeat, "I did it because I love you that much." Immediately follow this with a kiss to prevent any questioning that may dig you a deeper hole . . .

Next week: "Kissing the Lipless."

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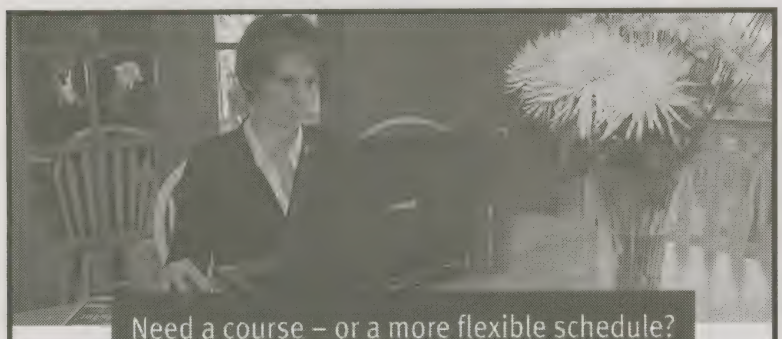
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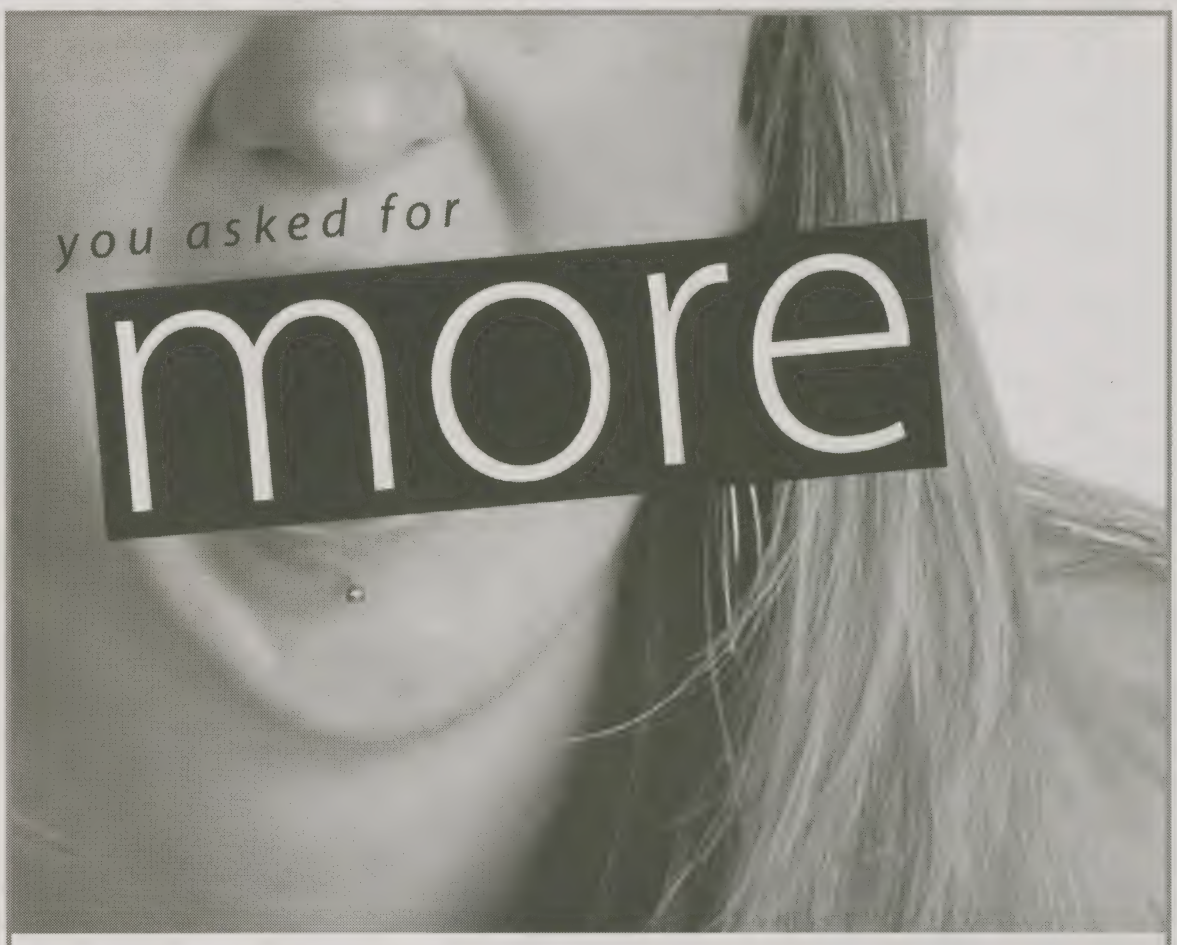

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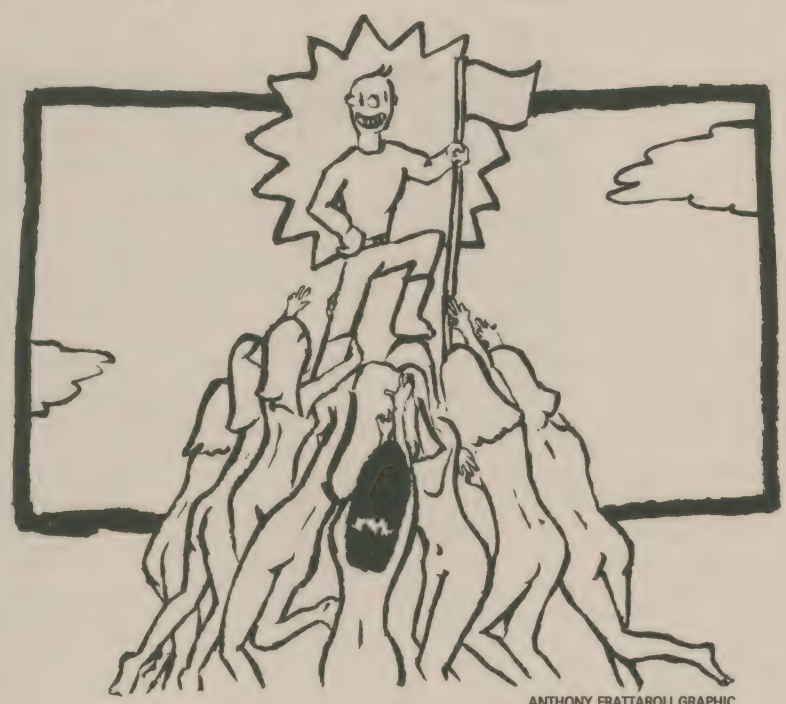
Pick-up artist to help Victorians score

by David Karp



ANTHONY FRATTAROLI GRAPHIC

Are you having trouble getting laid? Have no fear—Docandwriter will be here.

Docandwriter, who uses a fake name to protect his identity, is a lifestyle coach in Vancouver. He helps clients—he says 95 per cent are men—have more success with the opposite sex.

After a stint as an actor and singer, Docandwriter decided to study relationships. "I found that there was actually a secret society—a community of guys—who study relationships and how to attract women," he said. Now, he's been coaching for just over a year.

"What I'm really focused on teaching is stuff that's not unknown. It's not secret. It's stuff that Casanova or Don Juan or the great seducers have been doing way before the last century."

Many of his clients, who range from teenagers to 47-year-old businessmen, are embarrassed to admit they have difficulty with the opposite sex, which is one of the reasons Docandwriter uses a fake name. "It's kind of like Alcoholics Anonymous," he said of his courses, "but not for alcohol. It's for dating." Many of his clients don't tell people they've sought help.

Docandwriter conducts courses to help clients meet the opposite sex. He also runs courses that help get them in bed. "You really have to have a plan in mind. You need to know what you're doing and how you're able to affect the other person."

Docandwriter boasts that he's never had a failure amongst his students. "There's one guy I'm coaching currently who couldn't even look you in the eye when he spoke to you. He was really shy and scared of people. And now he's out there meeting women."

The pick-up coach says there are two ways to approach women. He calls one way the "indirect method," where the subject approaches a woman and attempts to have a conversation in order to find similarities between himself and the woman, all while pretending he isn't really interested in her. "The reason why this works is because women have an automatic shield against getting picked up," Docandwriter said.

But he prefers the direct method, where the subject approaches a woman and tells her up front that he is interested in her. "The direct way is a bit more honest," said Docandwriter. "From there, she gets to decide whether she wants to proceed or not."

On the personal front, Docandwriter is not looking to settle down anytime soon, after an "almost marriage" nine years ago.

"I do have a girlfriend. Actually, I should qualify that—I have three girlfriends," Docandwriter said, adding that they all know about each other.

According to the pick-up artist, it's conversation and how you take care of yourself that matters most. "Brad Pitt—he's a great looking guy and everyone loves him. But the first two years in L.A., before he got famous, he couldn't get a date to save his life," he said. "So it's not a matter of looks. It's how you make someone else feel. You have to really listen and care about what they think. The only way this works is when you see that woman as a person in front of you."

But on his website, which features scantily-clad women, Docandwriter uses words such as "the game" to describe meeting women, and a testimonial boasts that Docandwriter "has without a doubt the tightest day game of ANY I have seen. Every girl he opened was HB8+." HB is an acronym for hot babe, in this case a minimum of eight on a scale from one to 10.

"A lot of this lingo has been around for a long time, which is why I use it," he said. "In the community that I'm from, this is the language that we use.

"It only demeans women if you're being mean to women and your intention is to demean women."

Despite the fees he charges, Docandwriter doesn't feel he is exploiting anyone. "If you think about consultants who charge $1,000 an hour to consult for Donald Trump, there's really no difference," he said. "Except that instead of real estate, we're talking about dating."

Noreen Begoray, a sociology professor at UVic, says there is an ethical problem with coaching people to pick up women. "Getting a coach to teach men how to communicate better with women in order to pick them up is the problem, not the solution," she said.

According to Begoray, people have difficulty communicating with the opposite sex because "girls and boys often learn different communication styles from a very young age. Other people and the media continually suggest what is appropriate for men and women."

Wendy Lum is a registered clinical counselor with UVic Counselling Services. Over 500 people come to Counselling Services each year with relationship or friendship issues. Last year, 246 people visited with social isolation and anxiety problems.

Lum said that problems with relationships normally stem from within. "I usually will look at their relationships in their families. A lot of times, I have students who were bullied or teased as children."

She stresses that a strong self-esteem is the most important factor for success in love. "You can't really love another person until you love yourself," she said.

Lum helps people with all sorts of difficulties, including picking up women. But she says it's not her job to judge clients' lifestyles. "I'll check with people what their intention is. If they want to pick up lots of people, that's they're choice," said Lum.

"But I might say, 'Is there any cost to do that? Can you look at yourself in the mirror?'"

Docandwriter will be teaching Seduction Level 1 in downtown Victoria on Feb. 11 and 12 for a cost of $550. More information is available at www.seductionboard.com. UVic Counselling Services offers free counselling to students year-round.

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Power-feminism and popedom in *Top Girls*

UVic Fine Arts students take the lead in the cast, crew and production of the Phoenix Theatre's latest offering

What: Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls*
When: Feb. 9 to 18
Where: UVic Phoenix Theatre
How much: $10 to $20

by Jessica Smith

There's a lot of estrogen in the rehearsal room, but the Phoenix Mainstage production of Caryl Churchill's *Top Girls* isn't a female morality lesson. Ball-breaking feminists can be a frightening bunch, according to members of the cast and production team.

"The play raises questions about the feminist issue," says costume designer Matt Jackson, one of the few men involved in the all-student production, "but it doesn't give an answer per se. It's not pro-feminism or anti-feminism. It just raises some questions that need to be asked, and our production doesn't give those answers either. It's left open." The questions the play asks are about a woman's desire to lead a double life as a traditional female (a wife or mother) and as an independent person—a career woman, adventurer, or even as Pope.

"Marlene, the main character, leaves her daughter behind in her rise to the top, and I found that especially applicable to what it means to be a woman," says actor Danielle Janess. "I was able to bring [my daughter] to a couple of the rehearsals, and everyone was really supportive. I don't know if it would have been different working with a male director, and whether the climate would have been so warm."

Set Designer Carla Orosz worked on *The Accidental Death of an Anarchist* at the Phoenix earlier this season. "It was all men and one woman, and it was completely different," she says. "There's a lot of rambunctiousness, like yellin' and screamin' when you've got a group of men together, and all the testosterone was just flaring. When you've got a group of women, they can be quieter I guess."

Jackson doesn't mind being part of the minority. "I wouldn't say I feel out of place by any means," he says. "I wouldn't call myself an alpha male—I'm not exactly in there with big fucking testosterone energy, so I don't feel uncomfortable at all. The process has been a lot more fluid, a lot more organic than when I've worked with more male production teams and cast."

TIM MATHESON PHOTO

Devon Taylor, left, and Ingrid Hansen scoff at patriarchy in Caryl Churchill's acclaimed 1982 play.

Jackson's uniqueness in *Top Girls* isn't only due to his gender—undergraduates in designing roles are rare in Mainstage productions.

Caryl Churchill's plays challenge tradition in theatre. In *Top Girls*, Churchill wrote three sections with disparate styles and settings, tied very loosely together by an underlying narrative. For Jackson, this meant designing costumes for a dream world of "silhouettes drawn from the collective unconscious" and a realistic 1980s corporate world of shoulder-padded power suits.

Jackson designed the costumes for the dream world in blood red. "It almost seems clichéd at this point, but red is in a very real way the colour of female power," he says. "It's blood, which is childbirth, and menstruation, as well as war and bloodshed, so it's a really powerful colour, especially for women."

Even before researching '80s fashion, Jackson wondered if the feminist issues of a quarter-century ago, when the play was written, are still relevant today.

"What I've come to is, yeah, it is still relevant," he says. "It's a piece of history, but at the same time what was happening [was] the development of this power-feminism, this ball-breaking corporate woman. Now [feminism] has become the norm."

Jackson, Janess and Orosz agreed that you didn't have to be a feminist to enjoy the play, or to perform or design it.

"I don't see how it's possible to be woman and not be a feminist," says Janess. "Is there a lot of expression of my feminism in my day-to-day life? Maybe, maybe not. Depends on the day."

Jackson isn't as sure. "I consider myself an equalist," he says. "Gender isn't something I really see as an obstacle, or it shouldn't be. I'm a feminist in that I don't have a traditional patriarchical point of view, but in my experience I haven't seen a whole lot of sexism, so it's almost a non-issue to me."

"I think the same way Matt does," says Orosz. "We're all equal. I mean I know that women have fought for the things I can have now in life, and I'm grateful for that, but I don't think that we need to go 'rah rah, we are women!' I'm a human, just how Matt is."

For more information about Top Girls and the ongoing Phoenix season, visit www.phoenixtheatres.ca/season

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How to melt a cold, black heart

An innovative Valentine's event mixes music, theatre, visual art and good old-fashioned debauchery

What: Clove and Anchor Entertainment and Visualfxtc present "A Black Valentine Cabaret"
How much: $10 advance at Ditch Records and Fan Tan Studios, $12 at the door
When: Saturday, Feb. 11, doors at 9 p.m.
Where: 715 Johnson, 2nd Floor (Above the old 711 Bingo)

by Steve Carey

If you're a spouse, a single, a couple, a cupid, a lover, a laugher or if you just want to dress up, there'll be a black valentine waiting for you on Feb. 11.

Clove and Anchor Entertainment and the Visualfxtc studio present "A Black Valentine Cabaret," a sensual space designed to entice and elate those who come into contact with it. The event was organized by Heather Furneaux, a UVic Public Relations student and experienced event co-ordinator, in conjunction with professional set designer and painter Barry Overn.

The 2,700-square-foot (250 square metres) Visualfxtc studio has the aesthetic of an abandoned doll factory, potential oozing from its widespread rafters, hardwood floors and set-pieces in progress. Hoping to trump the average gig, Overn and Furneaux are working with lighting designers, film artists and actors to create a grandiose spectacle.

"We're taking the average [art rock] show one step up and making it more of a theatrical production," says Overn. "We're building a set [and] working with lighting and wall treatments to give people an experience they wouldn't normally get."

For "A Black Valentine," they've enlisted designer Robyn Swank, a freelance photographer and artist who specializes in dark, disturbing, beautiful imagery. Swank's "Cabinets Of Curiosity," a series of macabre 1700s-style shadow boxes, are on display in galleries in Los Angeles, where she spends part of the year.

The quality of Visualfxtc's work can be seen in the unique interior of downtown t-shirt shop Vortex, located on Pandora Avenue. Overn created the display layout, a mock-rusted steel wall, and meticulously airbrushed a painted wall back to it's original brick.

PROVIDED PHOTO

The luscious Bettina Suicide will perform burlesque at the event.

The 37-year-old Overn has been painting murals professionally for 19 years. His methodical nature, engineering background and sense of humour are evident in his airbrushing work. Self-employed since 1986, he subcontracted for three years to a Calgary theatrical production company, designing and creating for Disney and Cirque du Soleil, among others. Two years ago Overn moved to Victoria to set up the Visualfxtc studio.

Furneaux, 23, has been an event co-ordinator since high school. Victoria's Hot Hot Heat played their second gig at her first event, a ballroom masquerade. A street-smart 16-year-old, she had the mental wherewithal and connections to hire security, book the stage acts, rent the smoke machines and saddle up a burlesque show.

Some might remember Furneaux from the "dress like a turkey to give away a turkey" event in November, when she wore a turkey suit for two and a half weeks to promote Victoria band Nuvo Wavo. She was also event coordinator for Hank and Lily's "Carnival Of Horrors" and the 2005 Folk Fest closing party, an event with over 600 attendees.

"A Black Valentine" features local battle-of-the-bands finalists Yum Yum Bang Bang, Bradley Kurushima of Ghosts spinning a dance music set, and in-character actors mixed in with the crowd.

Burlesque shows will be performed between acts by burlesque duo Bettina Suicide and Lily Fawn, as well as Dylan Davis and Nasstasia L'ange Blue. Six-piece band Meat Draw will complete the night with their jitterbuggin' blend of folk-funk rock.

"If you don't have anybody, you might at least find a one-night stand," says Furneaux. "But seriously, it's an excuse to dress up, wear your little back dress or a tux, come in costume and have fun."

Overn's Visualfxtc and Furneaux's Clove and Anchor Entertainment are intent on designing future events, planning to import performance art troupes and work with guest designers to develop bimonthly event nights.

Advance tickets for "A Black Valentine" are available at Ditch Records and Fan Tan Studios. The event is 19+ and licensed, so bring two pieces of ID if you want to drink and four if you want to drink heavily. Formal, semi-formal, or fully costumed attire is recommended.

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4. Making a pass at some of the hotter profs on campus, then settling for a librarian

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6. If you're gay/bi, try to convince some of your straight friends that, deep down, everyone goes both ways

7. Try and fail to molest yourself

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Poets and performers fundraise for local songwriter Glenna

Proceeds from the 'Glenna-thon' will help the songwriter record a follow-up to 2003's *i am the eye*

Who: Glenna, Lisa B., Mike Sheehan, Anj Moran, and Erin Robinsong
Where: The Solstice Café, 529 Pandora
When: Saturday, Feb. 11, doors at 7:30
How much: $10 to $15

by Sarah Towle

Want something more from your concert-going experience? How about an evening that combines great music with live performances of stories, poems, freestyle rap, and even a tap-dance battle?

The upcoming Glenna-thon promises just that. The show features local artists including singer/songwriter Glenna, spoken-word poet Lisa B., freestyle rap artist Mike Sheehan, and dancers Anj Moran and Erin Robinsong. All proceeds from the concert will go towards the production of Glenna's next album.

With her rhythmic piano and guitar-playing and her soothing voice, Glenna often draws comparisons to Tori Amos.

She was a semi-finalist at the Victoria Independent Music Awards in February 2002 and was given a coveted spot at the Victoria Folk Festival. Her last CD, *i am the eye*, was released in 2003.

Spoken-word poet Lisa B. is no stranger to the stage. She has been performing her political and passionate works for audiences across Canada since November 2001. She recorded a CD, *Salvaged Music*, that includes 17 poems accompanied with instruments including banjo and washtub bass. Her published poetry recently won for Favorite Chapbook at Victoria's M Awards.

Lisa B. looks forward to supporting her friend and fellow performer Glenna.

"Whenever I've had a fundraiser, Glenna's always been there to support me," she says. The two have combined their talents for impromptu jams and performances many times before with surprising results. "Her music brings my poetry alive and adds a rich dimension to [it]."

Also excited about the Glenna-thon is Mike Sheehan, who will be MCing and performing at the event. Sheehan is the founder of Beatboard, a team of professional artists and facilitators who run alternative learning programs for youth. When asked to describe his upcoming performance, Sheehan says, "You can use the words 'social experiment' and 'oral spontaneous rhyming poetry'—a.k.a. freestyle rap. You could even expect some interactive audience activation."

Sheehan, Lisa B., and Glenna will share the stage with local dancers Erin Robinsong and Anj Moran. Erin often combines her two artistic mediums—dance and spoken poetry—onstage, which she may do at the Glenna-thon. "I've given her the liberty to do whatever she's inspired to do," says Glenna. As for Moran, she'll be performing various dance routines and will be joined by Glenna onstage for a dance-off. "I met Anj through taking dance classes at the Lynda Raino Dance Studio. So Anj and I will be having a tap dancing battle at the Glenna-thon."

Tap battle included, the Glenna-thon will be a night of diverse and exciting performances from some of Victoria's vibrant young poets.

For more information, visit www.glennathestar.com

WESLEY SCOTT PHOTO
Left to right, Mike Sheehan, Lisa B., Glenna, and Anj Moran.

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Harrison Ford and Paul Bettany on the upcoming *Firewall*

by Briony Smith

The eagle has landed—after three long years off-screen, blockbuster behemoth Harrison Ford hits theaters with *Firewall*, a cat-and-mouse thriller co-starring Paul Bettany (*A Beautiful Mind, Wimbledon*). Both actors spoke to members of the student press during a North American Colleges and Universities telephone conference on Jan. 30.

Ford tries to appear in a film a year and attributes his recent absence to the amount of pre-production on *Firewall*. "As good a script as it was to start with, we had things we wanted to accomplish and unfortunately, we lost our first director due to a tragedy in his family," he said. "We had to then find another director and begin to craft the script to reflect some of his concerns. It was about two years getting to the screen."

Ford, who enjoys the opportunity acting gives him to "live different lives," researches all of his roles. For *Firewall*, he met with a number of banking professionals and computer software designers to get an idea of their lives for his portrayal of Jack Stanfield, a security specialist who has to get tough with thieves who kidnap his family.

He's played plenty of strong characters, but Ford dismisses the tough-guy title.

"I'm *not* an action hero. I've never actually done action films. I do thrillers that have action in them. I do films like *Indiana Jones*, which I think of as kind of fantasy-comedy."

It doesn't help Ford that people *see* him as an action hero, even when he tries on the occasional dramatic or comedic role.

"Maybe that's why a film like *K-19* is so hard for me to get people to accept because over the years their experience has generated a preconception. I've tried to do that from the very beginning of my career by picking a rather wide range of characters, from [*The Mosquito Coast*'s] Allie Fox to *Regarding Henry* to more mainstream things like *Witness*, but then I've always tried to stir the pot a little with things like *K-19*."

Yet all these roles, no matter the genre, have one thing in common—he's the star. But the way Ford sees it, he's like a fireman. "I don't want to roll out on a little trash fire in a dumpster. If I'm going to pull on my boots, I want to fight the big one."

But as a leading man, the unlimited freedom Ford has to choose projects can be a curse.

"If people come to see a film because of having had a good experience with me in another film, I want to make sure that the new film is as good as I can make it. That means I sometimes impose my point of view on people that have some degree of resistance to that because I think I'm right about it. If I'm not right about it, I'm going to wear it anyway. Nobody is going to pick out [*Firewall* director] Richard Loncraine on the street and say,

PROVIDED PHOTO

Bettany and Ford in the delayed techno-thriller, opening Feb. 10.

'You made a terrible movie.'

"I was once in New York and I was walking to my car. As I approached I saw somebody begin to write a ticket. I said, 'Hey!' from the middle of the street as I approached. Like everybody else, I was going to try and talk them out of it. He turned around and looked at me and said two words—"*Mosquito Coast*"—and snapped it onto the windshield. I don't like the guy and I don't like the ticket, but it's his choice. Everybody has a different idea of what it is that they want."

Firewall was a movie that Paul Bettany definitely wanted in on—he'd never been in a thriller before, and wanted to work with Ford. Even getting into the headspace of high-tech thief Bill Cox wasn't too much of a stretch. "I tried to look for what I had in common with the character—and he wants $100 million. I wouldn't mind $100 million," he laughs.

Playing the baddie fits in neatly with Bettany's plan.

"I want to do as many different types of things as I can with as many different types of people." And *Firewall* gave Bettany the chance to go big or go home. "You're playing a villain in a thriller, so there are certain notes that you have to hit. There are traditions and rules. Then the rest of it is gravy. I want to give people a good ride in the movie. In order to do that, they need to sort of be fooled into believing that it's sort of real. Businessmen lay off human beings from work. Businessmen decide to make shirts in Indonesia and use eight-year-old children to do it in order to turn a profit. Businessmen make really cold decisions everyday. Businessmen run diamond mines. They walk around in the legitimate world—I think I tried to play it more like that. If I sat there stroking a cat with a scar down my face, I think people would kind of be alienated, and that's not what you want."

And with this powerhouse cast, *Firewall* should give genre fans exactly what they want.

MOVIE | FINAL DESTINATION 3

Watch us die in preposterous ways

by Michelle da Silva

There are some movies that beg for a sequel. The first one is either so good that you want to see more, or you're left hanging at the end, wondering what comes next. Other movies couldn't possibly need a sequel, but a franchise can rake in a lot of cash for a movie studio. *Final Destination 3* falls into the latter category.

The *Final Destination* series began in 2000, when a group of high school students escaped death in an explosive plane crash. What the students learn, however, is that you can never really escape death if it's already got your number. One by one, we watch the characters die in the order they would have if they'd stayed on the plane.

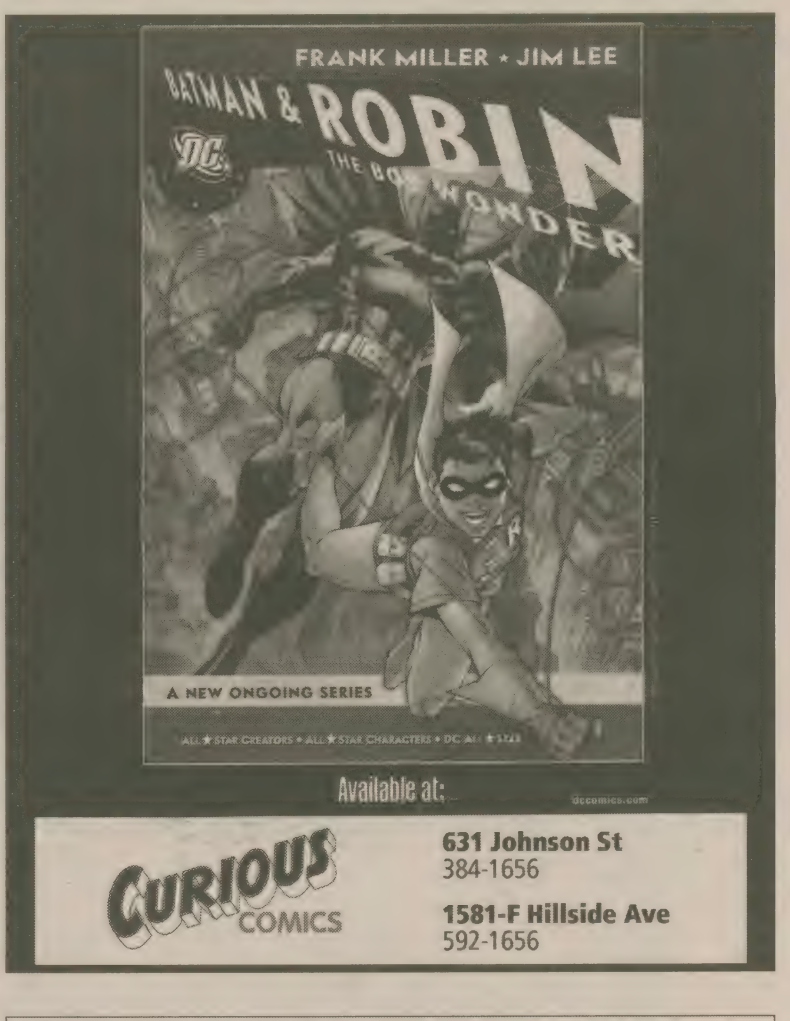
The next installment, released in 2003, followed the same premise, with the plane crash replaced by a gory highway pileup. Like the first film, all those who seemed to "escape" death eventually met their maker one way or another. By now, with the third film about to dominate the weekend box office, the *Final Destination* formula is calculable and routine.

Final Destination 3 opens in an amusement park, where a group of 10 high school seniors cheat death on a perilous rollercoaster ride. Yearbook photographer Wendy Christenson (Mary Elizabeth Winstead) is unwillingly placed at the heart of the matter when she finds forewarning clues about the death of her classmates in all of her photos. Wendy and Kevin Fischer (Ryan Merriman) try and stop death as it stalks their unsuspecting, nubile teenage pals.

If teen horror flicks always promise brutal, over-the-top death scenes, the chance to see naked chicks, and a cast with a median age of 18, then *Final Destination 3* won't disappoint.

James Wong, also responsible for the first film, directs a cast of mainly Vancouver-based actors in their hometown.

Final Destination 3, though pointless and disposable, is ironically funny and shamefully entertaining.



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Hot in the city

Victoria spotlights local art during February's 'Arts in the City' festival

by Micah Luxen

Victoria has always had an artistic reputation. Whether it is the tourists raving about Butchart Gardens or the Open Space gallery unveiling its newest avant-garde attraction, creativity is easy to spot on the Island. All throughout February, art is just about mandatory during Victoria's very first "Arts in the City" festival.

Last February, Victoria was designated a "Cultural Capital of Canada" by Canadian Heritage Minister Liza Frulla. Through the Cultural Capitals program, the federal government recognizes cultural and arts achievements and provides funding for new cultural and arts programs.

As a result, Victoria is spotlighting almost 100 local performances, events and exhibits all month long. These include theatre and dance, music, visual and media arts and ongoing exhibits and events.

Eighteen-year-old Sunny Shams and his jazz trio will be performing at several venues during the festival, including the Central Bar and Grill, a common venue for both established musicians and jazz amateurs.

PROVIDED IMAGE

Victoria was named a "Cultural Capital of Canada" last February.

"When it comes time to perform, basically we go out there and have fun," says Shams. "That's what it's all about. That's what we love to do—make good music, bring people together and, most importantly, try to take them to another place. Take them from their daily lives and make them forget about everything, and enjoy themselves for the two or three hours we're together."

A jazz piano and voice student at the Victoria Conservatory of Music, Shams plays around town on a regular basis, but feels nevertheless that the festival is an exceptional opportunity for artists and patrons.

"This festival is important for Victoria and the arts community because it showcases some of the amazing talent that Victoria has, and gives local artists, both in the visual and performing arts, a chance to get themselves and their work out into the [public eye]."

The festival brings publicity and extra recognition to deserving local artists, and it gives Victorians a chance to explore the city's vibrant artistic community.

"It's a great opportunity for the public to take some time and scope out some of the wide varieties . . . of visual and performing arts that people from their own city are producing," says Shams. "It is definitely an inspirational festival to both the artists and the public."

Shams and co. will be performing next at Central Bar and Grill on Feb. 20, but if jazz isn't your thing, there are plenty of other fun events coming up in the next few weeks. The Conservatory of Music Showcase on Feb. 17 will feature students, faculty and choirs from Victoria's top music school.

On Feb. 11, visit the Art of Dance, a multimedia event of local dancers, choreography and visual artists in the creation process. And for a taste of international art, visit the Theatre Roundtable with Puente Theatre and Zibota African Moonlight Theatre on Feb. 26.

For more information and a full event listing, check out www.artsinthecityvictoria.com. Please note that many of the venues require registration prior to arrival.

CD | DALA

Dala
Angels and Thieves
Universal Records

by Stephanie Glover

Listening to this CD is like working at the mall. It's got some all right moments, but they can't distract you from the fact that it basically sucks.

Make no mistake, these ladies have got pipes and strong musical foundations—singer Sheila Carabine studied piano with the Royal Conservatory of Music for 11 years! But while the lyrics can be strong, a lot of them smack of high-school poetry.

Lines like "All the things she could be, if she weren't so set on being thin" speak to something real, but it's just not insightful or innovative.

On the whole, *Angels and Thieves* is an easy listen, but none of the songs on the album are memorable. Like folding sweaters or flipping burgers, you can get through it if you decide it's not that bad, but why would you do it if you don't have to? Instead, for some pop-rock with strong female vocals that isn't the musical equivalent of eight bucks an hour, check out Rilo Kiley's *More Adventurous*.

CD | THE STARTING LINE

The Starting Line
Based On A True Story
Drive-Thru

by Tori Wong-Rose

After a solid seven years, The Starting Line have gone Hollywood and transformed into a tasteless mish-mash of New Found Glory and Hedley—except without the hit songs.

Based On A True Story has little in common with the group's fun, ambitious emo-punk debut. *Say It Like You Mean It* was the perfect combination of upbeat pop-rock and acoustic angst. Their signature style even earned the band a spot on last year's Warped Tour.

But with middling fame comes the urge to conform, and so they have, embracing the sound of commercially palatable pop-punk that's made bands like A Simple Plan into pre-teen heartthrobs.

Not a single track stands out, the vocals are merely adequate, and the group can't seem to find a single catchy guitar riff or bass line.

Humor eases the pain from time to time. Whether it's intentional or not, the lyrics on songs like "Bedroom Talk" are so bad they're hilarious. Consider: "My arm's the hose and you're the fire out of control/And I've got to put you out before there's nothing left at all."

There are moments of near-redemption. "Photography" has great instrumentals and is reminiscent of The Starting Line's old sound, but the lyrics are weak. Nothing quite measures up. It's natural for a band to mature and adopt new sounds, but The Starting Line just sold out—cashing in their identity for a shot at going gold.

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Chris Trumpy: Prince of playoffs

Head coach of rival UBC T-birds says the Vikes captain is 'fundamentally one of the best players in the league'

by Clarke Ries

There's something dangerously unpredictable in Chris Trumpy's economy of motion.

His slow jog up the court is out of place—even in this scrimmage with teammates—and seems inappropriately lazy given the intense battle for the ball taking place only a few paces ahead of him. For a moment it's not clear if this is the Chris Trumpy, the rock-steady Vikes point guard and captain of Canada's sixth-ranked varsity team.

Then, a near imperceptible shift forward in his lope, a hop-skip of the feet like a distance jumper before the leap. By the time the explosion of speed and power from his six-foot-three frame registers, both Trumpy and the ball are on the way to netting two points.

Trumpy is approaching the end of his fifth and final year of eligibility. Except for a year spent playing basketball for Loyola Marymount University near Los Angeles, Trumpy has spent his collegiate years as a dynamic force with the UVic basketball program.

On Feb. 17, the Vikes hit the Pacific Division semi-finals, the first of three tournaments that lead the Canadian national championships in Halifax March 16 to 19. As of Feb. 9, the Vikes' 14–5 record puts them in second place in the west, behind the undefeated UBC T-Birds.

Not that UBC's perfect record fazes Trumpy. "You play the games to win, and the minute you stop believing you can win the games then you shouldn't be out on the court," he said. "I think every guy . . . in our locker room believes that we can beat them."

The team's head coach, Craig Beaucamp, said Trumpy is the athlete responsible for putting the Vikes on the national map.

"He's been instrumental in turning this team that didn't make the playoffs into a team that's among the best in the country," said Beaucamp. "This is as much Chris Trumpy's team as anybody's. In his first couple years there were senior players, but as those players faded away over the years, he has surfaced as a leader of the team, especially on the court."

The only fifth-year athlete on the team, Trumpy leads a pack of young players described by Beaucamp as being predominantly first and second year. Leadership is an overused term in today's sports culture. It's said too often and in too many contexts to have much meaning. However, somewhere between his first Vikes training camp and his final games as a player, it has become the quality that makes Trumpy irreplaceable.

MEGAN STEWART PHOTO

Chris Trumpy fights for two points against a Trinity Western defender in the Vikes season opener Oct. 28. Play-offs begin Feb. 17.

When he falls making a block during practice, every hand extends to help him up.

He speaks quietly, but heads turn to listen.

Beaucamp's faith in Trumpy is unshakeable. "Chris is always the one in the spotlight, making big passes, big shots, big plays," he said. "He's a very smart, perceptive young man. He understands the importance of good team chemistry, good team culture and a hard work ethic."

Despite the mountain of praise, Trumpy is not infallible. "I think, at times, if Chris does not feel challenged in practice or in a game situation, he's not always his best," continued the coach. "If I put him on the best player on the other team, [UBC point guard] Pasha Bains for example, I think he can be the very best defender on the floor.

"I think, at times, he has the same challenges as anybody else, but when crunch time comes I know I can always count on Chris. . . . He's going to have his struggles, but I just know that no matter what, when it's all said and done, he's my man, so to speak."

UBC men's basketball coach Kevin Hanson has coached against Trumpy for every year of the point guard's career, and he knows better than to underestimate Trumpy's ability to produce in the clutch.

"He's fundamentally one of the best players in the league," said the coach of the top-ranked Thunderbirds. "I've seen him single-handedly win too many games to discount him. He plays best when the game is on the line. He's got great court awareness, and even when he doesn't have the ball you always have to be watching for him and what he's doing."

In a high-pressure situation, Trumpy is an opposition coach's worst nightmare, and it shows in Hanson's approach to solving the Trumpy Question. To win, he says, "You have to keep the ball out of his hands."

Trumpy is pursuing a master's degree in public administration, a decision motivated in part by a desire to live in Victoria. "It's a bit of a government town," he said, "and it's best to get an applicable degree . . . I didn't want to be taking underwater basket weaving for my last year here."

Despite the colossal shift Trumpy is about to undergo as he leaves collegiate athletics, he is emphatic that when it comes to his desire to win, nothing has changed.

"When the ball goes up and there's those 40 minutes when you're in the game, I don't think that drive's changed at all. I've still got that same competitive edge that I have and I think I'll always have."

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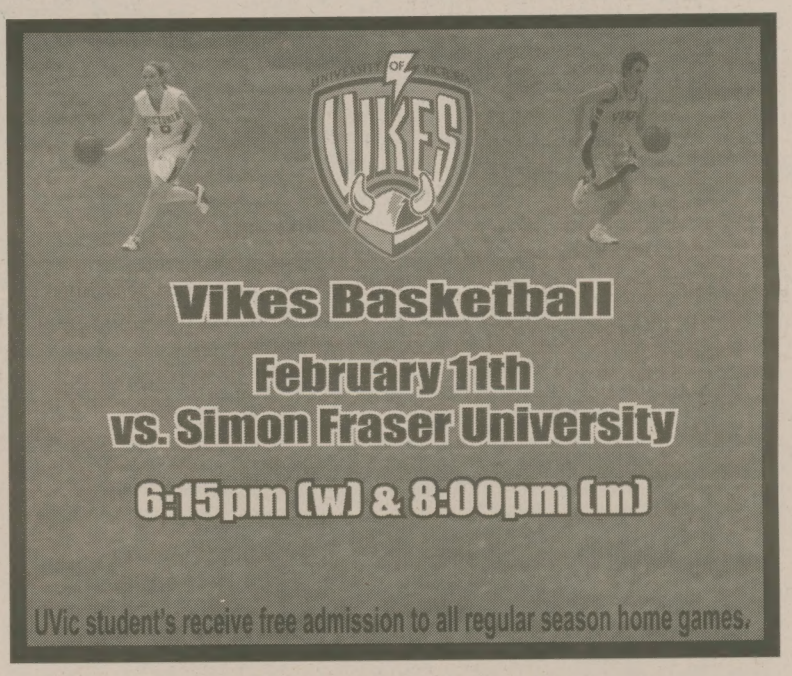
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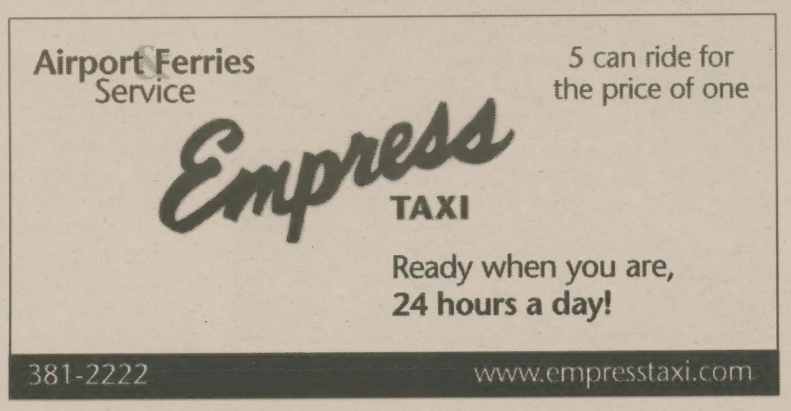


Over the fall season men rebuild, women step it up

by Tori Wong-Rose and Megan Stewart
photos by Megan Stewart

Injuries and inexperience may cause some teams to lose their morale, but not the Vikes men and women's rowing teams.

This year has been tough for both, but the season has not been without success.

Since many members of the men's team graduated last year, the fleet is now composed of rowers with only one or two years' experience with a varsity program.

"We have a pretty young group of guys so we are rebuilding the team," said Howie Campbell, the men's head coach. "We haven't done so well, but there is nothing particularly weak—it's mainly just an experience issue."

The lack of experience resulted in the men not performing as well as they have in the past—they finished fourth at the 2005 Canadian Championships. Tom Bailey took gold in the lightweight single. The previous year, the men were edged out of the top place by four points despite making all six finals and medaling in five.

Campbell said that the men's team is a lot stronger and has gained experience over the fall season. He believes that the hard work the men have put forward will result in an improved spring showing.

The women's rowing team faced a far different problem than the men: they have suffered from a number of out-of-sport accidents. From car collisions to illnesses caused by house mold, the team's younger athletes were forced to step up and fill in for the injured rowers.

"All the strange accidents that have happened really show how . . . rowing is a team sport," said head coach Rick Crawley. "It's been a really frustrating season but also really exciting. We accomplished a lot of things."

Despite the injuries, the women were able to win their eighth Canadian Championship in nine years. The team dominated the lightweight events, taking top spot in the lightweight double and four events. The women found success in the heavyweight races, narrowly trailing the University of Western Ontario in both the pair and the eight for second place.

The spring season looks good for the women's team, said Crawley, who anticipates a strong showing at the Brown Cup Challenge in April. The women have won the past two tournaments, held in Victoria at the Gorge Waterway, and Crawley will be looking to make it three in a row.

"We are hoping that we will do it again if everyone is healthy," he said.

Gwen McLennan and Lindsay Jennerich are first in Canada.

Tom Bailey takes gold at the Canadian Championships.

Keltie Fraser takes part in the Monster Erg.

ROWING WRAP-UP

Head of the Charles, Boston, Oct. 23

The Vikes sent three crews to the world's largest regatta and took the top place in two events.

The women's four finished the three-mile race in 19:07.07, 11 seconds ahead of second-place Ivy League school Brown University.

The women's lightweight four captured the event they won three years ago, and with a time of 19:14.06, finished 15 seconds ahead of the pack.

With such strong competition here, winning an event is extremely difficult," said head coach Rick Crawley. "To win two events is a very rare and a remarkable feat."

Head of the Gorge, Victoria, Oct. 29

With 100 crews, UVic hosted the largest meet ever held on the Gorge. The Vikes won nearly all their events and defeated rival UBC in every division, reclaiming the championship crown lost for the first time last year to the T-Birds.

For the first time in two decades, the men's varsity eight finished behind UBC. They dropped 22 seconds behind the team that boasted four Olympians and world champions.

Canadian Championships, Victoria, Nov. 6

It was a sweet day for the Vikes at the Canadian University Rowing Championships.

The women's team captured their eighth national title in nine years, after slipping behind UBC last season.

Both the lightweight double and four finished first. The heavyweight double and four finished second.

The men managed fourth place overall. The Vikes took gold in the lightweight single while the lightweight four and eight finished fourth.

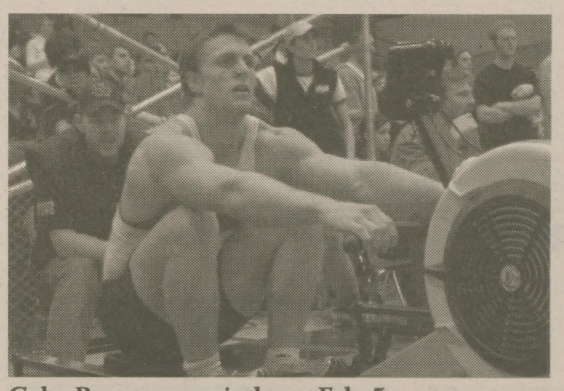
Canadian Indoor Rowing Championships, UVic, Feb. 5

Short for Ergometer, a stationary, land-based rowing machine that simulates rowing on water, the Erg events pit individual competitors against each other side-by-side and unmoving.

The 21st Monster Erg drew 350 rowers and saw the Vikes dominate the lightweight flights.

Lindsay Jennerich won the Senior A national title with a personal best of 7:20 over 2,000 metres. Gwen McLennan captured the U23 national title.

Saul Garcia Alvarez won the men's lightweight Senior A event with 6:31.6 and Brent Dallimore took first in the Senior B lightweight with 6:23.7.



Gabe Bergen rows indoors Feb. 5.

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OLYMPIC WARM-UP | ON ICE AND AT THE SLOPES

Will 'skategate' again plague Olympic judging?

by Gavin Day

There you have it: The Opening Ceremonies for the 20th Winter Olympiad begin Feb. 10 at 10 a.m. Pacific standard time.

Once the pleasantries are done, competition begins in earnest. For 16 days from Feb. 10 to 26, Canadians will share a favourite song and hope to hear it every night while a Canadian athlete wears a gold medal around his or her neck.

To quote the official slogan of these Olympic and Paralympic Games, "Passion Lives Here." Let's live that motto: sing loudly, sing proudly, yell and cheer at your TV . . . and let the games begin.

The Paralympic Games run from March 10 to 19 in Torino, Italy. UVic alumni Lauren Woolstencroft will be competing in the alpine skiing events and looks to add to the two gold and one bronze she won at the 2002 Games in Salt Lake City.

Snowboarding

Canada's showing on the slopes is at once tainted and proud. At the '98 Games in Nagano, Canadian Ross Rebagliati won the first snowboarding gold medal in Olympic history, but he briefly lost the prize when he tested positive for marijuana, a restricted substance.

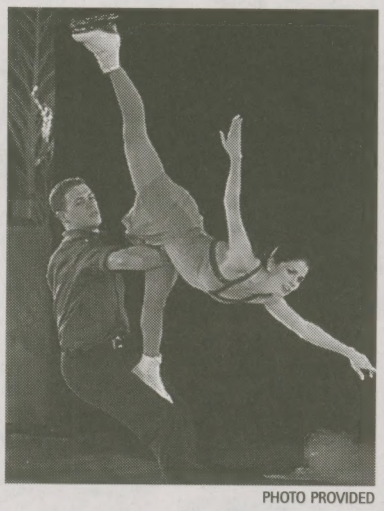

PHOTO PROVIDED

Pelletier and Sale trust their skills will nab gold, not scandal.

Snowboard Cross will make its Olympic debut, joining the Parallel Giant Slalom (GS) and the Halfpipe events as the third snowboarding discipline at the Olympics.

On the men's side, Jasey-Jay Anderson and Drew Neilson are two Canadians who could advance a long way in the competition. Anderson, at his third Olympics, will compete in both the Cross and in the GS.

The women's team features Maelle Ricker and Dominique Maltais, who are both seen regularly on World Cup podiums. Four years ago, Ricker competed in the halfpipe event, but failed to medal. This time around, she is favoured to medal, but only if her performance is top-notch. Alexa Loo nabbed a World Cup bronze this season and, as the lone Canadian female competitor in the GS, will make a grab for a medal.

Swiss boarders are the best in the world in the technical events, and have numerous riders in both men's and women's events who could come away with gold. In the halfpipe event, the premier nation is the United States, with several athletes competing in the X-Games before heading over to Italy for the Olympics.

Curling

Canada is the strongest curling nation. Every year, Canadian rinks are favoured to win world championships, but Canada has only one gold medal in two Olympic Games (the late, great Sandra Schmirler led her team to gold in 1998).

This time around, Shannon Kleibrink and Brad Gushue will represent Canada at the rink as the teams' respective skips. Kleibrink lost to Schmirler in the finals of the Canadian trials leading up to the '98 Games and she will be looking to make a strong statement. The men have brought in veteran Russ Howard to provide experience to this younger team.

Both squads face Scandinavian challengers. Kleibrink will have to beat 2005 World Champions, Sweden, in order to win gold, and the Gushue rink will be in tough competition with Sweden and Norway.

Figure Skating

The sport of figure skating is hoping to recover from the black eye it suffered following the "Skategate" scandal of 2002 that eventually awarded gold to the Canadian pair, Jamie Sale and David Pelletier, and forced the judging community to change their tactics.

A medal by a Canadian figure skater is unlikely, but the best shot is current national champion Jeffrey Buttle in the men's program. Buttle won silver at the world championships last year. Emanuel Sandhu is also still looking to fulfill his potential on the Olympic stage. Tanith Belbin, born in Canada but competing for the United States in the ice dance competition, will challenge for a medal.

Nearly all skaters favoured to win hail from Russia, but the sentimental favourite in the women's event will be American sweetheart Michelle Kwan. In an age of teenage champions, the 25-year-old Kwan is hoping she can win the gold medal that has eluded her for several Olympics.

Hockey

In Torino, Canada looks to duplicate the double-gold performance of four years ago.

In women's hockey, it's almost a lock that Canada will win either silver or gold. It will be a Canada-U.S. final, and with strong leadership from the likes of Cassie Campbell, Danielle Goyette, Hayley Wickenheiser and Vicky Sunohara, Canada has an excellent chance of a repeat performance.

The men's team reads like a who's who of NHL professionals and they will face challengers from all the traditional hockey powers.

The Czech Republic will have something to prove, as they want to win back the gold medal they captured in '98.

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University Women's Club Scholarship Annual Evening of Music: Free and open to the public. A lively performance of classical piano, jazz and vocals by UWC Music Scholarship winner Nina Horvath and colleagues from the UVic Faculty of Music. Donations to the University Women's Club Scholarship and Bursary Fund gratefully accepted. Thursday, February 16th, 8:00 p.m. Philip T. Young Recital Hall, Maclaurin Building, University of Victoria.

THE NATIVE PLANT STUDY GROUP - FEBRUARY MEETING
"Where have all the flowers gone?" Ecological detective Emily Gonzales investigates the effects that herbivores and non-native grasses have on the native plants of our region. Thursday, February 16, 2006 at 7pm sharp. UVic, MacLaurin Bldg, Rm D-116. Non member drop-in fee: $2. For more info contact 595-5820.

SERVICES/ANNOUNCEMENTS

Social Co-op Forum for Lower Vancouver Island. Fairfield United Church, Lower Hall 8:30 (registration and coffee from 8am) to noon.

Victoria Queer Parents is a parenting group for members of the GLBT community in southern Vancouver Island who are considering becoming parents, are expecting, or are parenting babies and toddlers. The group meets regularly in Victoria. For more information, contact us by email: victoriaqueerparents@yahoo.ca

Four Corners Language Institute. Mandarin, Arabic, Spanish, ESL, and more! Evening classes Tues. & Thurs. 7-9 p.m. Teach English Overseas! www.fcli.bc.ca (250)383-6719

FREE ACUPUNCTURE
On campus stress clinic. We bill Green Shield directly. SUB upper lounge — Monday & Thursday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

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The Punjab University, CHANDI GARH (U.T.) INDIA has been designated by the Ministry of Advanced Education British Columbia. If you are interested in obtaining education at the PUNJAB UNIVERSITY CHANDI GARH you can get a student loan from the B.C. Ministry of Advanced Education. For more information you can contact: mtatla@uvic.ca

Is your life affected by someone's drinking? Help is available in the Victoria area. Call 383-4020 for more information or visit www.bcyukon-al-anon.org for more information.

Saanich Recreation offers quality, affordable Basketball, Volleyball, Badminton Leagues and Skills Development for pre-teens, teens and adults in state-of-the-art double gymnasium at Colquitz Middle School.
www.saanichrecreation.com or 475-5400 for details.

Saanich Recreation offers fun and tasty cooking workshops for pre-teens, teens and adults in fully-outfitted demonstration kitchen at Colquitz Middle School.
www.saanichrecreation.com or 475-5400 for details.

Gain teaching experience. Wild ARC wild animal rehabilitation centre in Victoria is seeking volunteers that can contribute to the development and delivery of education programs to local schools. Email info@wildarc.ca

Breastfeeding or pregnant and wanting to learn more? Looking for information or help? Wanting to meet other breastfeeding mothers? La Leche League Saanich/Gordon Head meets monthly. Our next meeting is on Wednesday February 8th at 10 A.M. This month's topic is "Realistic Expectations", but we are happy to discuss any topic related to breastfeeding. For location details call 479-6184.

Learn & Lunch every Sunday from February 12th to March 26th 11 a.m. Join us in our Greenhouse for a series of Free lectures & Tours of our Winter Garden. Follow that up with a soup lunch in our Tearoom. What could be more perfect for the rainy days of Spring? The Horticulture Centre, 505 Quayle Road, 479-6162. info@hcp.bc.ca

SIDNEY READING SERIES - Writers Ronald Wright and Michael Elcock at Red Brick Cafe, 2423 Beacon Ave., Sidney, February 17, 7:30 p.m. and Music. Admission $5.00 Contact Christine Tanner 655-4447

Lehigh Northwest Ltd. is coming to campus to recruit for Engineers-in-training. The initial work location will be in Delta, British Columbia. Please come out to our information session on Monday, February 13 from 5:30 to 7:30 pm to be held in the Harry Hickman Building Room 110.

Are you interested in finding out more about a career in policing? The Edmonton Police are currently recruiting constables and they will be on campus to give a presentation about careers with the Edmonton Police. Their recruitment team will be on hand to talk about the opportunities available, how you can apply, and to answer any questions that you may have. Be sure to attend on Tuesday February 14, 2006 from 5:30 to 8:00 pm. To be held in the David Strong Building Room C112.

WANTED

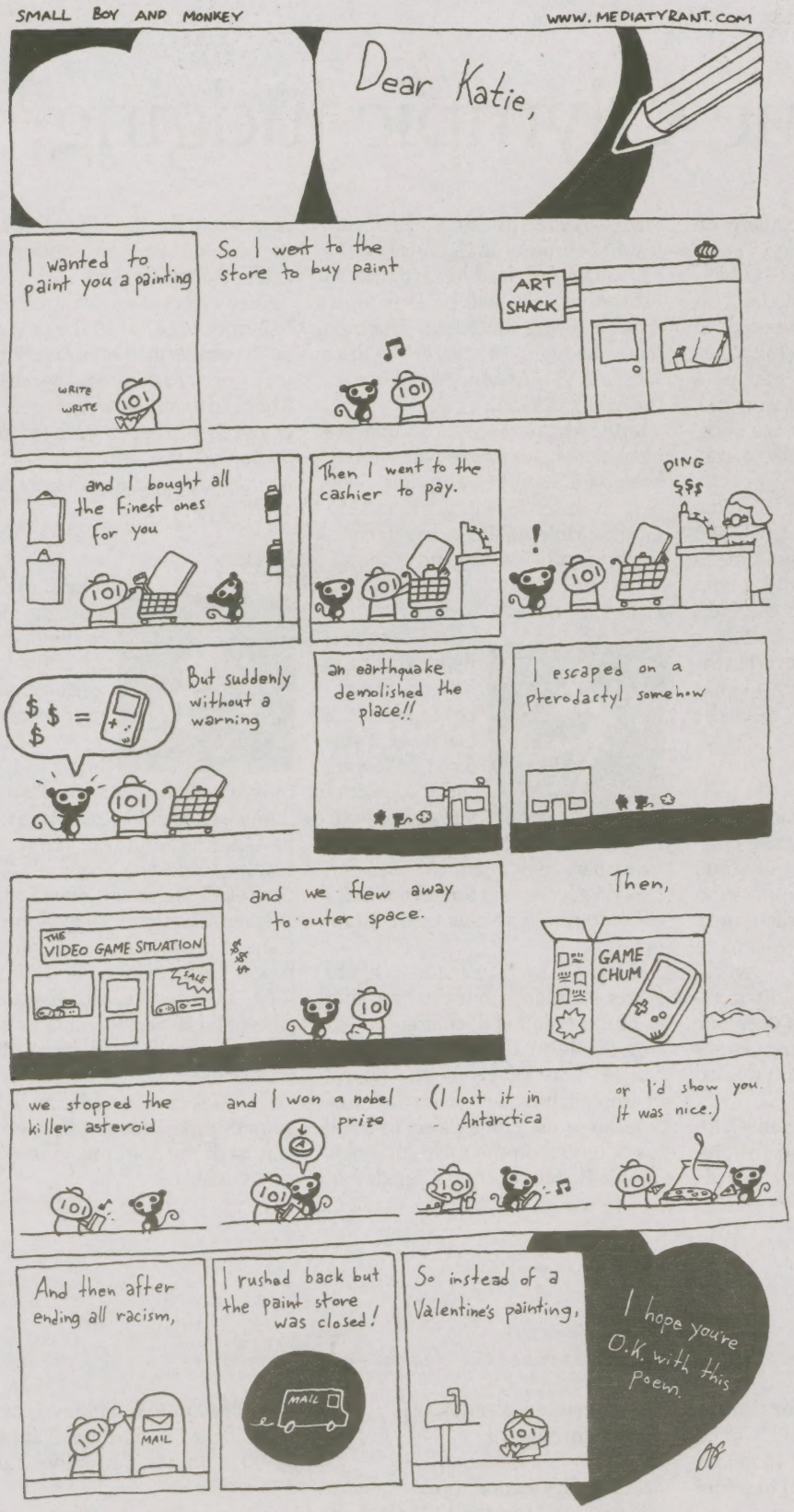
Bed dbl xlong, metal head/foot ends,cost $1000+, nice, 1yr 4m, sell $300. Pullout sofa/bed $75, 4chairs $5e, shelves$10, metal 2 draw. file cab $10. (250) 381 1225, Victoria -teruaki G.

HEY YOU!

Hey you non-creepy, semi-athletic cute guys who like beer and The Simpsons. I have a girl for you. Sarahwillhateme@hotmail.com

Ms. King, Cheers to 21! I'll never leave you for a 20 year old. Love, Your wife.

Did you know: the valentines day heart actually represents an upside-down ass waiting to be mounted? Well, it does


SMALL BOY AND MONKEY
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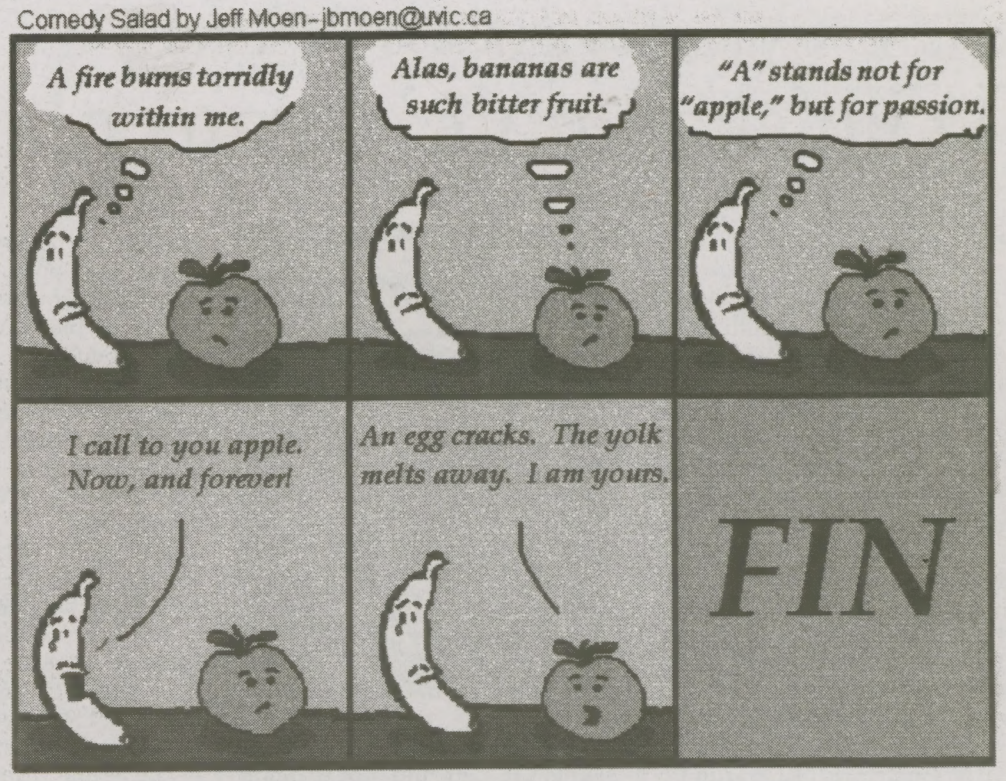
Dear Katie,
I wanted to paint you a painting
WRITE WRITE
So I went to the store to buy paint
ART SHACK
and I bought all the Finest ones For you
Then I went to the cashier to pay.
DING $$$
!
$ $ $ =
But suddenly without a warning
an earthquake demolished the place!!
I escaped on a pterodactyl somehow
THE VIDEO GAME SITUATION
SALE
and we flew away to outer space.
Then,
GAME CHUM
we stopped the killer asteroid
and I won a nobel prize
(I lost it in Antarctica
or I'd show you. It was nice.)
And then after ending all racism,
MAIL
I rushed back but the paint store was closed!
MAIL
So instead of a Valentine's painting,
I hope you're O.K. with this poem.

Comedy Salad by Jeff Moen - jbmoen@uvic.ca


A fire burns torridly within me.
Alas, bananas are such bitter fruit.
"A" stands not for "apple," but for passion.
I call to you apple. Now, and forever!
An egg cracks. The yolk melts away. I am yours.
FIN

DISCEPATI

I REMEMBER THE FIRST TIME I SAW HER.
OUR EYES MET ACROSS A CROWDED ROOM AND I JUST KNEW
IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.
JESUS CHRIST DUDE.
THE NEXT MORNING...
Mornin' sweets.
You don't look too good. Didn't you sleep well?
I have to say I slept pretty well after last night.
I slept fine, had a strange dream though.
Want to talk about it? Maybe we can find out what it means.
You may not like what you find.
Please, I want to know!
...Alright. So I'm at my place, and there's this polar bear...
I don't know what to do with him, so I put him in my freezer.
...and every day, I give him a salmon to eat.
Then, one day he turns his head to me and says:
"Salmon again?"

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